DOCTORAL THESIS

Sir William Hamilton
networks and knowledge

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Award date:
2020

Awarding institution:
University of Roehampton

Sir William Hamilton, Networks and Knowledge

By

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D.

Department of Humanities

University of Roehampton

2020

Abstract

This thesis focuses on Sir William Hamilton's Neapolitan years, exploring his interests in natural philosophy, antiquarianism and collecting alongside his diplomatic work. These are assessed within the eighteenth-century milieu from which they arose. The thesis demonstrates how he approached knowledge in a holistic manner, typical of an eighteenth-century amateur constantly networking through his extensive contacts. Hamilton's undertakings are explored in three ways. Firstly, his significant discoveries within the field of natural philosophy are analysed. Secondly, the nature and publication of his two vase collections are examined. Thirdly, the manner in which he was perceived by the general public is explored.

Hamilton knew a great deal about Naples long before the Envoy's post was vacant, and the thesis exposes his desire to live in Italy. Much has been written about his two vase collections, but the thesis demonstrates that although Hamilton is remembered for them, others were largely responsible for their publication. However, he collaborated with Josiah Wedgwood by giving him early access to the glorious coloured plates of the first publication which Wedgwood used to drive forward the Neoclassical movement. Hamilton's work in natural philosophy is analysed in detail, demonstrating that he significantly advanced understanding of the Neapolitan caldera.

Hamilton's decline in esteem began after Emma Hamilton (née Hart) was transferred from his nephew, Charles Greville, to live in Naples with the Envoy. Public disapprobation was based on Hamilton's relationship with Emma and his inept handling of British affairs in Naples during the Napoleonic era. Concurrently, the pair were viciously attacked by contemporary satirists. Sir William and Lady Emma Hamilton are considered here as a single unit, inseparable from the world of antiquities and especially ancient vases, Neoclassicism and Romanticism. As Hamilton's health declined after 1795, it is shown that Emma played an important diplomatic role. The thesis demonstrates that she is a person of importance in her own right. Overall, it is asserted that Hamilton's work in natural philosophy was outstanding and that his collections of antiquities and their subsequent publication were seminal in developing Neoclassicism in Britain.

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Acknowledgements

The motivation for writing the thesis emerged from my enjoyment of ancient Greek vases and the small collection I have made of them over the years. As the doyen of British vase collectors, Sir William Hamilton was an inspiration and the prospect of exploring his engagement with antiquity whilst he was British Envoy to Naples provided the impetus for the thesis

It would have been an impossible task without assistance, particularly with the many languages encountered during the research. I am grateful to Christopher Galleymore and Rosemary George for their help with French and Italian, to Herr Friedrich Stephan, who translated passages from Goethe and Tischbein for me, and to Sir Martin Harris for help with Latin translation. David Stone offered valuable assistance with Hamilton's financial affairs, and credit is due to Elizabeth Stone for taking photographs from seemingly impossible angles!

Networks are a feature of the thesis which has become a discipline in its own right, and Anna Collar is to be thanked for helping me come to grips with it. My supervisors, Michael Brown and Marta García-Morcillo, have been both generous with their time and crucial in assisting me develop appropriate research skills.

Writing the thesis has been a long and often lonely process. It would not have been possible without the tolerance, patience and support of my wife.

Introduction

William Hamilton (1730–1803), An Enlightenment Polymath

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) used the Latin phrase sapere aude, 'dare to know', to describe those who would think in new ways outside the established order. This mode of thought was characteristic of the Enlightenment.[1] In Britain It was reflected by the establishment of the British Museum in 1759, free for all to enter. Currently, memory of the Museum's foundation ideals is reflected in the Enlightenment Gallery, a testimony to a new order in which reason ruled. Within it, William Hamilton features as prominently as Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753), from whose vast collection the Museum was founded.

[1] Roy Porter, *Enlightenment, Britain and the Creation of the Modern Word* (Penguin Press, London, 2000), Chapter 1; Edward Miller, *That Noble Cabinet: A History of the British Museum*. (Andre Deutsch, London, 1973), pp. 43–63.

A huge head of a statue of Hercules dominates the Gallery's southern entrance, with the caption explaining that it was presented to the Society of Antiquaries by Hamilton in 1776 and found by him near Mount Vesuvius. This one artefact connects him not only to the antiquities he collected so voraciously, but also to the volcano whose mysteries he did so much to uncover and the learned societies of London in which he was to play such a leading role between 1763 and 1799, while he was Envoy Extraordinary in Naples. The Gallery illustrates how, by the later eighteenth century, cabinets of curiosities had become carefully catalogued collections, rather than the jumbles of artefacts that preceded them. Ken Arnold identifies the methods used to display them. They might contain a historical narrative, a focus on an individual object or a description of the function of an exhibit. Overall, the Enlightenment Gallery demonstrates how cabinets of curiosities functioned in Hamilton's age.[2]

One display case which focusses on minerals cites Hamilton as the donor of volcanic rock specimens from the Campi Flegrei, thus identifying him with the natural philosophic study of the earth, later to develop into the science of geology.[3] Entering the Gallery from the Great Court, a visitor is immediately confronted by a display case

[2] Ken Arnold, *Cabinets for the Curious: Looking Back at Early English Museums* (Burlington Ashgate Publishing, Farnham, 2006).

[3] Chloe Chard and Helen Langdon, eds, *Transports: Travel, Pleasure, and Imaginative Geography, 1600–1830.* (Yale University Press, Newhaven, USA, 1966), pp. 197–198.

dedicated to Hamilton. Its content illustrates his dual interest in ancient vases, both as ancient artefacts and as modern decorative objects in the work of potters, such as Josiah Wedgwood (1730–1795). A second theme within the display case is perhaps more controversial for the visitor. A miniature cork model from the early nineteenth century depicts a now lost Etruscan tomb with its roof removed, revealing the skeleton and grave goods of metal objects and pristine Greek vases surrounding it.[4] In a similar manner, Hamilton, guided by peasants with local knowledge, prised open a tomb at Trebbia near Naples. The pristine grave goods within it were removed and added to Hamilton's extensive vase and antiquities collection. To restrict treasure-hunting and to protect its antiquities, the new Kingdom of Naples and Sicily had deemed it illegal to act in such a way. Hamilton's disregard for local law demonstrates a ruthless aspect to his personality, which was normally refined and courteous. Overall, Hamilton's prominent position in the Gallery raises the question of how this youngest son of a minor aristocrat, with no inherited wealth and limited formal education, should become a person of such note throughout Europe.

[4] Richard Gillespie, 'The Rise and Fall of Cork Model Collections in Britain', *Architectural History,* 60, 2017, pp. 117–146.

Within the same display case the title page of Volume II of the bilingual French and English publication of Hamilton's first vase collection is shown, a work which brought him much fame across Europe. Its title emphasised Hamilton's status, although Pierre-François Hugues, 'Baron D'Hancarville' (1719–1805) was the actual author of Antiquités étrusques, grecques, et romaines tirées du cabinet de M. Hamilton, Envoye Extraordinaire de S. M. Britannique a la cour de Naples. Its four volumes were published between 1767 and 1776. Overall, in this important gallery Hamilton is recorded as an antiquarian, a proto-geologist, connoisseur and member of the Republic of Letters. These copious references identify Hamilton as a person of significance within the British Enlightenment.

The title of the thesis, Sir William Hamilton, Networks and Knowledge, requires elucidation. Although Sir William is the focal point, the intellectual and social background to the times in which he lived are explored, contextualising the varied fields in which he operated. For example, in Chapter Three the letters of Camillo Paderni, Director of the Royal Herculaneum Museum are analysed in depth. He had the responsibility for determining which recovered ancient artefacts should be saved and which destroyed. The letters were written before Hamilton became envoy in Naples but the elite world of the Republic of Letters, which included Hamilton, would have known

their content while Grand Tourists would tell of their own experiences on return to Britain. In Chapters Four and Five Hamilton's vase collections and their publications are explored within their historical context, and it is noted that people such as Josiah Wedgwood (1730-1795) and Thomas Bentley (1731–1780) enhanced the growth of Neoclassicism through their products. They sought Hamilton's advice, which they utilised to the full. Later, from about 1785, Hamilton's relationship with Emma Hart (later Lady Hamilton) is explored within the context of her little-researched personal achievements in the field of Neoclassicism, Romanticism and diplomacy. The final chapter considers Hamilton's decline in public esteem in Britain and Naples, within the context of both social change and the effect of the Napoleonic invasion of Italy. The thesis sets Hamilton within the shifting context of networks and knowledge in the eighteenth century.

When Hamilton was appointed Envoy to Naples in 1764, there were no obvious signs of latent talent, save for connoisseurship. He had left Westminster School aged fifteen, followed by an inconspicuous decade in the army. His mother, Lady Jane Hamilton (born before 1704–1754), may well have been the mistress to Frederick, Prince of Wales (1707–1751). She ensured that William was raised in close proximity to Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz's son, later to become

George III (1738–1820). Through such high-born connections the young Hamilton interacted with the aristocracy, both at Court and through contacts made at Westminster School. For most of his life he enjoyed the friendship of the monarch, together with other well-connected individuals. Had he been appointed to any diplomatic post other than that of Envoy to the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily, his important work exploring the natural philosophy and antiquity of the area would not have come to pass. Naples, with Vesuvius in active mode and the dramatic rediscovery of Herculaneum and Pompeii, had become Europe's epicentre of cultural and natural philosophic activity.

After the death of his first wife, Catherine, in 1782, Hamilton's life entered a second and far less stable phase. Charles Greville (1749–1809), Hamilton's favourite nephew, trafficked his mistress, the youthful Mrs Emma Hart (1765–1815), to him.[5] She was 21 years of age on her arrival in Naples while Sir William was fifty. Thereafter the objectified Emma would add a further dimension to Hamilton's oeuvre, as he used her as a model for classicising images, both in portraits and through her talent for mime. Emma's relationship with Admiral Nelson marked the tipping-point between Emma being perceived by the public as exciting, and the cause of downright scandal requiring Hamilton's

[5] Emma, Lady Hamilton was christened as Amy Lyon. When she became Greville's mistress he insisted that she be known as Mrs Emma Hart, the name she retained until her marriage to Sir William Hamilton in 1791.

ignominious removal from his Neapolitan position in 1799. Although the thesis focusses on Emma only in relation to her cultural importance and her diplomatic significance in Hamilton's declining years, it will be shown that she was a talented person in her own right.

Hamilton's life was far from that of the conventional diplomat, transitioning on a daily basis between that of the industrious envoy to that of antiquarian connoisseur and natural historian. The thesis explores Hamilton's complex and varied interactions with persons of all social classes, from whom he frequently gained knowledge that he used to great personal advantage. Although much has been written about Hamilton in the last fifty years, there has been little analysis of the breadth of his intellectual activities and interests. The thesis is the first to employ network analysis in order to clarify the significance of Hamilton's varied relationships, which in turn acts as an aid to situate him within the wider Republic of Letters.

The title, 'Sir William Hamilton, Networks and Knowledge' is cast broadly because, as a polymath, he was involved in many facets of learning and knowledge production. His influential work, Campi Phlegraei, detailed the volcanic and seismic nature of the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily in a manner never previously undertaken. Likewise, the publication of his two vase collections gave a positive focus to an aspect of antiquity previously disregarded in Britain.

Hamilton reached Naples with significant background knowledge of archaeological events at Herculaneum and Pompeii. Seemingly, he had little prior knowledge of Vesuvius and the caldera surrounding it, but it intrigued him and he researched this volcanic region throughout his thirty-five-year tenure in Naples. From inquisitive amateur, he became a leading authority on what would now be termed volcanology and seismology, making significant discoveries. Concurrently, he amassed large numbers of ancient vases and published them. Hamilton's antiquarianism is an important area to analyse as these activities led to a world-wide growth in Neoclassical taste. The significance of his role as Envoy to the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily is frequently overlooked, but it underpinned his other activities by giving him access both to restricted areas and important personages.

Network Analysis and Historiography

Throughout the thesis network diagrams are inserted to contextualise the subject matter under discussion. They seek to identify Hamilton's connections with other actors chiefly through analysis of social networks. Everyday life is built on networks, from family interactions to wider agencies such as the police force, education, and health care. Duncan Watts's Six Degrees: The Science

of a Connected Age,[6] first published in 1971, was a precursor of network analysis, indicating that in six moves one human can be connected to any other person on the planet.

In recent decades network analysis has expanded to form global patterns, a task which was impossible before the age of super computers. Networks comprise sets of actors who may be individuals or organizations, the smallest of which consists of two persons (dyadic ties) and can be scaled up to include social interactions between any number of actors. They assist in the analysis of entire social entities and help explain anomalies within them. Social analysis uses nodes between the individual actors and the ties, edges or links (relationships or interactions) that connect them.

Networks help clarify change in popular perceptions. Initially, a few actors may hold a minority opinion, others may then come to share this new position. A tipping point occurs when a majority hold what was once the minority opinion, thus making that view mainstream. One good example explored in the thesis is that in the early eighteenth century only a minority perceived ancient vases as having Greek origins; but by 1795, when Hamilton published his second vase collection, the title began A Collection of engravings from ancient

[6] Duncan Watts, *Six Degrees: The Science of a Connected Age* (Heinemann, New Hampshire, 1971).

vases mostly of pure Greek workmanship.[7] The tipping point had been reached.

There is an extensive bibliography of works and internet resources focussing on networks. A good starting point is Charles Kadushin's Understanding Social Networks, in which he offers a basic description of the concepts involved. In recent years there has been a surge of interest in network approaches to historical writing, enabling scholars to move beyond traditional narratives by giving new tools to identify, map and visualise source material. The specialist vocabulary used in networks enunciates relationships, such as personal, social, commercial and ideological relationships. A good example is to be found in Sinews of Empire (2017), edited by Håkon Teigen and Eivind Seland, which contains a series of thirteen essays on varied aspects of the Roman Empire using networks, demonstrating clearly how network analysis can benefit historical research of any period.[8] Currently, there is a major project using networks within an eighteenth-century context. Stanford University's project Grand Tour Travellers, a subset within Mapping the Republic of Letters, is a digital data base which developed John Ingamells's vast Dictionary of British and Irish Travelers to Italy 1701-1800 (1997), into a digital research resource.[9] It includes

[7] In the thesis this work is referred to as *CEAV.*

[8] Teigen Håkon and Seland Eivind, eds, *Sinews of Empire*, (Oxbow Books, York, 2017).

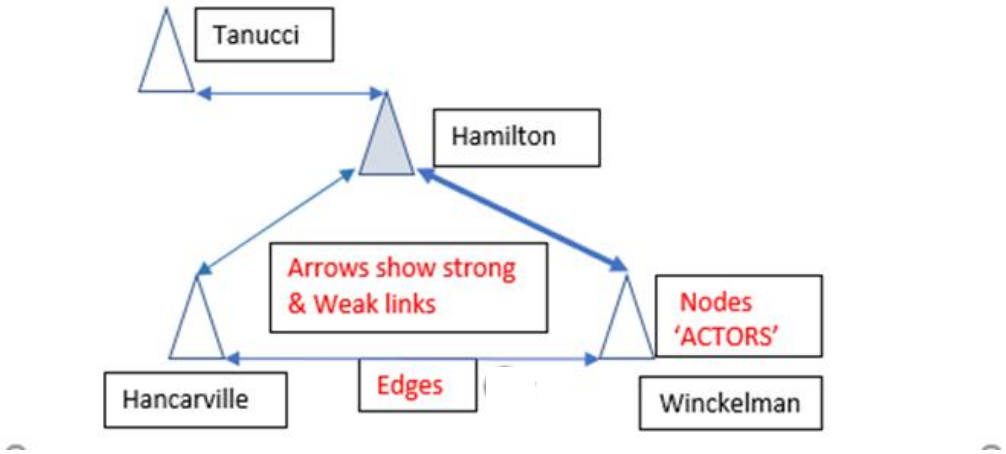
[9] Giovanna Ceserani,

references to Hamilton and those who visited him in Naples, demonstrating the frequency with which visitors arrived in the capital, who they were and the routes by which they arrived. Networking was a sine qua non within the Republic of Letters, made clear in Anne Goldar's important book, Impolite Learning: Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680-1750 (1995).[10] Not only does Goldar analyse the hierarchy of members within the Republic, she also illustrates the slowness of communication between them. Hamilton might expect a communiqué to London to reach its destination in three weeks, so different from modern instantaneous communication.

http://republicofletters.stanford.edu/publications/grandtour/
(Accessed 17 09 2019).

[10] Anne Goldgar, *Impolite Learning: Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680–1750* (Yale, Yale University Press, 1995).

Network Diagram 1



An EDGE demonstrates links between ACTORS. The ARROWS show where there is linkage between them. The THICKNESS of the EDGE indicates the strength of the connection. NODES represent the ACTORS involved.

This example demonstrates Hamilton's role in bringing concerns regarding the nature of the excavations at Herculaneum and Pompeii to the attention of Prime Minister Tanucci. Hamilton's NODE is filled to show him as the principal ACTOR. Winckelmann provides most evidence, so making his EDGE stronger.

Networks are explored where there is a clear need for the relations between actors to be clarified. One such example concerns networks which allowed Hamilton to have influence on excavation techniques at

Herculaneum (see Network Diagram 1, above). He learnt of current bad practice from scholars in Naples, accepting their arguments. Next, using his privileged access as Envoy, he mediated change with the Royal Family and Prime Minister Bernardo Tanucci (1698–1783).

Hamilton has been the subject of two major biographies emphasising different aspects of his life. In 1969 Brien Fothergill published Sir William Hamilton, Envoy Extraordinary. Its preface expresses the biographer's task and the limitations of it, but also demonstrates the extraordinarily wide scope of the Envoy's interests:

Hamilton was a many sided and versatile character. To do full justice to his activities would require the combined skills of a diplomatic and social historian, an art historian, an authority on Greek and Roman antiquities, on eighteenth-century music, on volcanology and on natural history to name but the chief of Sir William's interests.[11]

Fothergill's work focuses on Hamilton as a person, noting how the events surrounding him shaped his actions. Two decades later David Constantine, a noted Hellenist and German specialist, published Fields of Fire, A Life of William Hamilton (2001), using primary sources unavailable to Fothergill. While commending the earlier biography, Constantine claimed that his own would offer 'A stronger sense of

[11] Brian Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton, Envoy Extraordinary.* (Nonsuch Publishing, Stroud, 1969), p. 11.

Hamilton's European, particularly German connections and importance; and a greater interest in him as a writer.'[12]

In 1996 the British Museum mounted an exhibition devoted to Hamilton, displaying some of the vases, intaglios and metal objects he collected, together with his many publications. It was accompanied by a superb catalogue, Vases and Volcanoes, edited by Ian Jenkins and Kim Sloan,[13] ***which Constantine accurately described as 'a great and beautiful treasure-house of knowledge'.***[14]

There has been too little research as to why the Neapolitan post attracted Hamilton. Constantine is dismissive: 'It cannot be said that Hamilton was driven to get to Naples. . . An opening appeared, he tried for it and got lucky.'[15] ***Fothergill suggests that his principal motive was to remove his asthmatic wife, Catherine Hamilton, née Barlow (1738–1783) to a warm climate. It was 'Duty to his ailing wife as well as for his ambition'.***[16] ***Although Catherine's health was a genuine matter of concern to her husband, this thesis will demonstrate that there were other important underlying reasons for the move to Naples. The Envoy's interest in fine art is considered here chiefly in relation to his***

[12] David Constantine, *Fields of Fire: A life of Sir William Hamilton* (Wiedenfield & Nicolson, London, 2001), p. xxvii..
[13] Ian Jenkins and Kim Sloan, eds, *Vases and Volcanoes: Sir William Hamilton and His Collections* (British Museum Press, London, 1996).
[14] Constantine, *Fields of Fire,* p. xvii.
[15] Ibid., p. 15.
[16] Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton*, p. 28.

trading. While it is true that his correspondence frequently refers to the purchase and sale of pictures, it does not add to the discoveries he made or to his influence in the development of Neoclassicism.

Hamilton's childhood was a lonely one, with both parents heavily involved with their own different, but busy, occupations. However, at Westminster School he developed friendships with Lord Stormont (1727–1796) and Frederick Hervey (1730–1803) who, in adulthood, would become extremely influential public figures. Later Hamilton became intimate with the circle of Horace Walpole (1717–1797). These were wealthy, university-educated connoisseurs of fine art, who had participated in the Grand Tour. Jeremy Black's account of The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century (1992)[17] provides an account of this practice, outlining its nature and the many faceted difficulties facing the traveller. John Ingamells, A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy, 1701-1800 (1997)[18] records the journeys of many hundreds of those traveling in the eighteenth century. They offer the modern scholar an insight into the nature of travel and the difficulties faced by tourists who visited the Envoy in Naples

Prior to his diplomatic appointment, Hamilton would have seen impressive cabinets of curiosities. Edward Miller titled his book on the

[17] Jeremy Black, *The British Abroad: The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* (Sutton Publishing, Stroud, 1992).
[18] John Ingamells, ed., *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy, 1701–1800* (Yale University Press, Yale, 1997).

history of the British Museum That Noble Cabinet (1973),[19] while Patrick Mauriès, Cabinets of curiosities (2002), describes their fascination for a world before the age of mass travel and deep scientific understanding.[20] The magnificent and widely known Farnese art collection, on display in Naples since 1734, was a further draw for an art connoisseur. Taking all these factors into account, it is unsurprising that when the Naples vacancy seemed likely, Hamilton took the initiative and proactively applied for it.[21]

Hamilton was charged by the Foreign Department in London to reconnoitre the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily with the aim of increasing trade.[22] It suited the Envoy well. He could travel without restriction, apparently fulfilling his remit, but simultaneously engage with natural philosophy and antiquarianism. There is relatively little modern scholarship relating to Hamilton and natural philosophy, while there is a far greater volume of research into his antiquarian interests.

To understand Hamilton's perception of the world around him, it is important to comprehend the nature of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century. An excellent starting point is the work by Roy Porter, Enlightenment; Britain and the Creation of the Modern World

[19] Miller, *That Noble Cabinet.*
[20] Patrick Mauriès, *Cabinets of Curiosities* (Thames and Hudson, London, 2002).
[21] British Library, Add. MS 38200, f.198.
[22] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p, 25.

(2000).[23] Porter analyses the Enlightenment in a series of chapters, each of which focuses on a different aspect of the movement, enabling the reader to gain a clear understanding of the movement as a whole. Closer to Hamilton is Kim Sloan's compilation of essays, The British Museum, Enlightenment; Discovering the World in the Eighteenth Century (2003), published as an introduction to the opening of the Enlightenment Gallery of the British Museum. In it, Hamilton's contributions to the movement are explained in some detail. A telling sentence is 'He typifies the shift in Enlightenment thinking from a focus on natural history to a wider approach, since his own first connections with the Museum were through his gifts of examples of the productions of nature, lava from Vesuvius and fish and shells from the Bay of Naples'.[24] Thus the Envoy's natural philosophy and antiquarian endeavours are both contained within the Enlightenment Gallery. Although Hamilton's work in the field of natural philosophy is less researched than his work on antiquity, this thesis argues that he achieved more in the former than in any other. Martin Rudwick's book Earth's Deep History: How It Was Discovered and Why It Matters (2016) offers a general introduction to human understanding of time,

[23] Porter, *Enlightenment*.

[24] Sloan, Kim, *Enlightenment: Discovering the World in the Eighteenth Century.* (British Museum Press, London, 2003), p. 21.

both geological and cultural.[25] More specifically, Noam Andrews's article 'Volcanic Rhythms: Sir William Hamilton's love affair with Vesuvius' contextualises Hamilton within Rudwick's broader discussion.[26] There is one attempt to engage directly with Hamilton's work and achievements. Mark Sleep, a geologist, used Hamilton's seminal work Campi Phlegraei to write the article, 'Sir William Hamilton, His work and Influence in geology'.[27] In it he extracts much from Campi Phlegraei and offers annotations to it. Sleep's article formed the basis for John Thackray's 'The Modern Pliny', a chapter in Vases and Volcanoes.[28] Thackray devotes space to the theories of the Plutonists and Neptunists, then offers a precis of sections of Campi Phlegraei. The chapter ends with an analysis of how Hamilton gained the skill and confidence to make universal deductions from his previous observations. A recent addition to the understanding of Hamilton's achievements is found in Noah Herringman's work Sciences of Antiquity: Romantic Antiquarianism, Natural History and Knowledge Work (2013).[29] In it, a section is devoted to the production of Campi

[25] Martin Rudwick, *Bursting the Limits of Time: The Reconstruction of GeoHistory in an Age of Revolution* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2005).
[26] Noam Andrews, 'Volcanic Rhythms: Sir William Hamilton's Love Affair with Vesuvius', *Architectural Association*, 60, 2010, pp. 9–15.
[27] Mark Sleep, 'Sir William Hamilton, His work and Influence in Geology', *Annuls of Science* 25, 4, 1969.
[28] John Thackray, 'The Modern Pliny' in Jenkins, Ian and Sloan, Kim, eds, *Vases and Volcanoes: Sir William Hamilton and His Collections* (British Museum Press, London, 1996).
[29] Noah Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity: Romantic Antiquarianism, Natural History and Knowledge Work* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2013).

Phlegraei, analysing the importance of Hamilton's artist Peter Fabris (active 1740–1792). Fabris provided the important geological illustrations in Volume II, which frequently clarified Hamilton's text. Herringman will be mentioned again when discussing antiquarianism, with reference to the Envoy's simultaneous endeavours in other scholarly areas to which the discourse now passes.

Hamilton published An Account of the Discoveries at Pompeii (1777), a book of engravings with notes destined for the Society of Antiquarians of London.[30] It offered contemporary readers both images and notes of the state of excavations at that date. His best known publications are of the two vase collections he made. Pierre-François Hugues, known as 'Baron d'Hancarville', wrote and published the first of them. Hamilton was generously recognised on the title pages of each volume, Collection des antiquités, étrusques, grecques et romaines, tirées du cabinet de M. Hamilton, envoyé extraordinaire de S.M.britannique en cour de Naples.[31] AEGR was published between 1767 and 1777. Sir William claimed authorship of the catalogue to the second vase collection, with its elaborate title of A Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases Mostly of Pure Greek Workmanship Discovered in Sepulchres in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies but Chiefly

[30] Sir William Hamilton, *Account of the Discoveries at Pompeii Communicated to the Society of Antiquaries of London* (London, 1777).

[31] Hereafter it is referred to as *AEGR.*

in the Neighbourhood of Naples During the Course of the years MDCCLXXXIX. and MDCCLXXXX. now in the Possession of Sir Wm Hamilton. The publications were separated by some thirty years, and their reception differed considerably. The first vase collection was the most famous and was sold to the British Museum in 1772 for £8400, equivalent to a current value of £1,225,000.[32] Herringman observes that Hancarville and Hamilton journeyed to Paestum shortly after the new Envoy arrived. Hamilton began his first vase collection immediately after and its publication followed in short order.[33] Herringman describes Hancarville as a 'rogue antiquary'.[34] He acted as Hamilton's agent and was the author of AEGR, a frequent subject of discussion among scholars.[35] The scholarly community does not engage with the question of why Hamilton's collection and its publication were produced in tandem. I will argue that the vase acquisition and its publication were a joint project, masterminded by the eloquent but untrustworthy Hancarville.

In recent years, many scholarly articles have explored aspects of the collection and its publication. Claire Lyons's article 'The Neapolitan

[32] Figures in brackets following an eighteenth-century sum of money are taken from the Bank of England Historic Inflation Calculator. https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator (Accessed 02 02 2020).

[33] Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity,* Chapter 3.

[34] In the thesis he is referred to as 'Hancarville'.

[35] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*; Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton*; Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*; and Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes*.

context of Hamilton's antiquities collections' contextualises Hamilton within a South Italian tradition of collectors,[36] while Maria Masci's article 'Birth of Ancient Vase collecting in Naples in the Early Eighteenth Century' traces how AEGR was in the tradition of southern European folio-sized volumes on antiquities.[37] Hancarville's text, often overlooked in favour of the splendid coloured prints it contains, is an important contribution to early theories of why art exists at all. Daniel Orrells makes this clear in 'Burying and excavating Winckelmann's History of Art'.[38] What Hamilton desired was a catalogue raisonné of his collection. Instead, Hancarville used Hamilton's significant cash input to write his own history of the origins of art. Herringman (2013) has diligently researched the production process and offered much detailed new evidence illuminating the way by which the AEGR project was realised.[39] The chapter is a useful reminder that AEGR was not a coherent work, with text and illustrations distinct from each other. Some scholars analyse small segments of AEGR in minute detail. The text has beautifully engraved capitals at the commencement of each section and Nancy Ramage discusses them in 'The Initial Letters in Sir

[36] Claire Lyons, 'The Neapolitan Context of Hamilton's antiquities collections', *Journal of the History of Collections,* 9, 2, 1997.
[37] Maria Masci, 'Birth of Ancient Vase Collecting in Naples in the Early Eighteenth Century, *Journal of the History of Collections,* 2007, 19.
[38] Orrells, D 'Burying and Excavating Winckelmann's History of Art', *Journal of Classical Reception*, 3, 2, 2011.
[39] Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*.

William Hamilton's collection of antiquities', in which she details the work of Hancarville's talented engravers and also identifies considerable plagiarism from Italian artists.[40]

Michael Vickers, in 'Value and simplicity: eighteenth-century taste and the study of Greek vases' (Past & Present, 1987), supports my view that the first vase collection and AEGR were a unified project. He highlights the commercial aspect of AEGR's publication, arguing that, in part, the work was designed to increase the monetary value of vases. Yet his discourse ignores Hamilton's delight in collecting, together with Hancarville's yearning to be published alongside the famed J.J. Winckelmann.[41]

A substantial quantity of Neoclassical imagery found on Wedgwood's products have their origin in AEGR. Josiah Wedgwood maintained close contact with the Envoy. He received early prints from AEGR, using them as designs for his mass-produced Neoclassical pottery. There is a substantial bibliography devoted to Wedgwood. Anthony Burton's Josiah Wedgwood, A Biography (1976) provides a good introduction to his life and environment and describes his rise as a manufacturing pioneer.[42] Kathleen Farrer's Correspondence of Josiah

[40] Nancy Ramage, 'The Initial Letters in Sir William Hamilton's Collection of Antiquities', *Burlington Magazine* 129, July 1987.
[41] Michael Vickers, 'Value and Simplicity: Eighteenth-Century Taste and the Study of Greek Vases', *Past & Present* 116, August 1987.
[42] Anthony Burton, *Josiah Wedgwood, A Biography* (Andre Deutsch, London, 1976).

Wedgwood. (1906) allows the reader a personal access into his world. It demonstrates various facets of his character, from hard-nosed businessman to a softer, more aesthetic, individual.[43] Hamilton had close contact with Wedgwood, as explained in Nancy Ramage's article 'Wedgwood and Sir William Hamilton: their personal and artistic relationship'.[44] She identifies how Wedgwood liked and admired Hamilton, but allowed him no financial gain from the potter's heavy dependence on Hamilton's vases and illustrations from AEGR. J. Barry, in 'Consumers' passions: the middle class in eighteenth-century England', traces how imagery derived from AEGR reached the growing middling population in the form of cheap ceramic objects decorated with highly modified Neoclassical imagery.[45]

From circa 1785 newly opened Etruscan tombs in areas around Naples led to major acquisitions of the ancient vases left within them as grave goods. Hamilton began to collect again, this time on an even grander scale than previously. Figure 25.2 is taken from the frontispiece to CEAV, itself illustrating Hamilton's entanglement with Emma. He published this second collection, but this time he claimed to

[43] Kathleen Farrer, *Correspondence of Josiah Wedgwood* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1906).
[44] Nancy Ramage, 'Wedgwood and Sir William Hamilton: Their Personal and Artistic Relationship', *The Consumer Revolution in 18th Century English Pottery*, Thirty-Fifth Annual Wedgwood International Seminar (Birmingham, Alabama, 1990).
[45] J. Barry, J., 'Consumers' Passions: The Middle Class in Eighteenth–century England', *The Historical Journal* 34, 1, 1991.

be author, not patron. In terms of modern scholarship, less has been published about the second collection of vases. Descriptions of them are offered in the biographies written by Fothergill and Constantine, while Ian Jenkins contributes a detailed description of the production process in Vases and Volcanoes (1996)[46]. Herringman rightly argues that It is too simple to accept Hamilton as the author of CEAV in the conventional sense, as he used Wilhelm Tischbein (1751–1829) more as editor than publisher.[47]

AEGR was a work designed for the elite of the mid-eighteenth century, but in the decade of the 1790s the context for the publication of CEAV had changed (see Figure 31). The emerging Evangelical Revival contained within it strong strictures against sexual sin. Its adherents believed that the human form should be displayed fully clothed. This religious dimension is helpfully discussed in William Gibson and Joanne Begiato, Sex and the Church in the Long Eighteenth Century (2017).[48] Thora Brylowe demonstrates that CEAV has none of the priapic illustrations of AEGR, for now the imagery is restrained much, as on Wedgwood's products.[49] She distinguished between the

[46] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton* and Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes.*
[47] Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity.*
[48] William Gibson and Joanne Begiato, *Sex and the Church in the Long Eighteenth Century* (2017).
[49] Thora Brylowe, 'Two Kinds of Collection: Sir William Hamilton's Vases Real and Represented'. *Eighteenth Century Life*', 32, 1, 2008.

two vase collections, noting that the images in CEAV were drawings only, remote from actual vases. Shortly after Sir William's death, some of Hamilton's vase illustrations were reproduced as Thomas Kirk, Outlines from the Figures and Compositions upon the Greek, Roman and Etruscan Vases of the Late Sir William Hamilton (1804).[50] Drawings of genitalia were expunged from all the images Kirk used in this book (See Figure 31.3).

Hamilton's dependence on collaborators in the production of CEAV has been noted. Wilhelm Tishbein, the editor of the four volumes, recorded his role in Aus meinem Leben (1861).[51] Furthermore, to encourage a wider circulation CEAV was produced cheaply, containing black and white images of scenes from vases. Hamilton insisted that its price reflected his desire to make the images more accessible to poor artists who might develop them further.[52] The very title – A Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases Mostly of Pure Greek Workmanship demonstrated that Hamilton had nailed his colours firmly to the mast of the vases having Greek origin, an increasingly common view as the eighteenth century progressed. Claire Lyons confirms their Greek origins in 'Nola and the historiography of Greek

[50] Thomas Kirk, *Outlines from the Figures and Compositions upon the Greek, Roman and Etruscan Vases of the Late Sir William Hamilton* (1804).
[51] Wilhelm Tishbein, *Aus meinem Leben*, (Braunschweig, 1861).
[52] Claire Lyons, 'Nola and the Historiography of Greek Vases,' *Journal of the History of Collections* (2012).

vases', developing the theme further to discuss the prevailing idea that vase painters copied the works of master artists from the Classical period.[53]

Hamilton's reputation as a distinguished scholar should have been cemented by the publication of CEAV. It was not to be. In the final decade of his life, his status was diminished by the scandalous affair between Emma and Admiral Nelson. Amidst the comprehensive literature concerning Nelson and the Hamiltons, John Sugden's Nelson: A Dream of Glory (2005) provides a scholarly biography, which contextualises Hamilton and Emma within the larger canvas of Nelson's life.[54] Early biographies frequently portray the Admiral as an unsullied hero, the best example of this is Southey's Life of Nelson.[55] Roger Knight, in The Pursuit of Victory (2006), comments that 'Southey constructed an early-nineteenth century hero as a model for the young [as] a "patriotic manual"'.[56] Southey's work is helpful only in understanding the hero cult of Nelson, which persisted long after his death. A helpful biography of Emma forms the concluding chapter of Quentin Colville and Kate Williams, Emma Hamilton: Seduction and Celebrity (2016).[57] It describes Emma's life after Hamilton's death as

[53] Ibid.
[54] John Sugden, *Nelson: A Dream of Glory* (Pimlico, London, 2005).
[55] R. Southey, *The Life of Nelson*, (W. P. Nimmo, Edinburgh, 1886).
[56] Roger Knight, *The Pursuit of Victory* (Penguin Books, London, 2006).
[57] Quentin Colville and Kate Williams, *Emma Hamilton*

one of public ridicule and penury, proceeding to analyse her perception from her death to the present day through correspondence, books and modern media, matters beyond the scope of the thesis.

My assertion is that scandal apart, Lady Hamilton has considerable importance in her own right, as artist, fashion setter and diplomat. Barry Gough wrote a threnody for Emma in That Hamilton Woman: Emma and Nelson (2016).[58] It details her relationship with Nelson and its disastrous consequences for both Sir William and Emma. In stark contrast, the exhibition devoted to her at Greenwich in 2016 moved the focus to the many positive factors in her life. Colville and Williams move the locus from scandal to a consideration of her many talents, and their introduction is aptly entitled 'Reimagining Emma Hamilton'.[59] She was instrumental in modifying dress styles from the cumbersome late Rococo to the far simpler and more practical dress la grecque, a view backed by Elizabeth Wilson and Amy de la Heye, in Defining Dress; Dress as Object, Meaning and Identity (2000).[60] The style gave women far more freedom of movement in their daily lives.

As the 1790s progressed, the Envoy became a much weakened figure in all ways. He was frequently sick, diplomatically out of his depth and

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[58] Barry Gough, *That Hamilton Woman: Emma and Nelson* (Seaforth Publishing Barnsley, 2016).

[59] Colville and Williams, *Emma Hamilton. : Seduction and Celebrity* (Thames and Hudson, London, 2016).

[60] Elizabeth Wilson and Amy de la Heye, *Defining Dress: Dress as Object, Meaning and Identity* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2000).

ever more dependent on Emma, who now had her own agenda alongside Nelson and Queen Maria Carolina. Naples, for so long a diplomatic backwater, became an important theatre of war during the period of the French invasion of Italy.[61] Chief amongst the actors involved in Naples were Queen Maria Carolina and her first minister, John Acton (1736–1811), Sir William and Lady Hamilton and Admiral Nelson. Lesser figures who played a role were King Ferdinand of Naples and Captain Foote (1767–1833), who commanded the British naval squadron in Naples before Nelson's arrival.

Nelson's wartime correspondence is considerable. The Letters and Dispatches of Horatio Nelson record all known official correspondence with him.[62] Its content is too wide ranging for this thesis. Far more focussed is John Davis and Giovanni Capuano, The Hamilton Letters: The Naples Dispatches of Sir William Hamilton, covering the period from 1797 to 1799.[63] It enables salient primary source material to be utilised in analysing the complex issues involved. Constantine gives the title 'Wreck and Disgrace, 1798-1800' to his chapter detailing the

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[61] The political background is well summarised by an article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 'Adams. J & Foot J. 'Revolution, restoration, and unification; the French Revolutionary Period' (in Italy) https://www.britannica.com/event/French-Revolution (Accessed 09 10 2018).

[62] Nelson, *The War Times Journal* (1996-2003). Author unstated. http://www.wtj.com/archives/nelson/ (Accessed 15/4/2019) (Accessed 01 11 2019). Nelson, 'The Letters and Dispatches of Horatio Nelson '

[63] John Davis and Giovanni Capuano, *The Hamilton Letters: The Naples' Dispatches of Sir William Hamilton* (I. B. Taurus, London, 2008).

events relevant to this thesis. It well summarises the position of Hamilton, who was recalled to London in 1799.

Sir William's plight had been worsened by the prurient interest of the satirists. Vic Gatrell, in City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London (2006), devotes a chapter to James Gillray (1767-1833), in which he contextualises him within the social nexus of the age. Gatrell says that much of Gillray's output was 'Hack works in a diversity of styles but the best of his work married his academic training with an eye for exaggeration'.[64] The statement is certainly true for Figure 30.1, while Figures 27, 30.1, 30.2, 30.3 illustrate his work alongside that of Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827) and Isaac Cruikshank (1764–1811). All three used aspects of Hamilton's last years in Naples to mock him as impotent and senile, while Emma's skills are derided and she is portrayed as a mere sexual object. The vases and statues in their prints are used as a trope for moral decadence.

Primary Source Material

The previous section demonstrates that while the secondary source material is extremely valuable in illuminating many aspects of Hamilton's work, it is the vast quantity of primary sources that make

[64] Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (Atlantic Books, London, 2006).

the thesis possible. Hamilton, a man of letters, left behind him a vast archive, now scattered throughout Britain and Europe. The manuscript sources used in the thesis are the National Archives at Kew, which contain Hamilton's diplomatic correspondence; the British Library; Keele University and material in the Wedgwood Museum; the John Rylands Library, which houses an archive of letters from the Envoy's niece, Mary Hamilton; the British Museum, for papers relating to Hamilton's publications; and the Slebech File in the Haverfordwest Public Library, which documents the accounts of his estates in Wales. Of special importance is The Collection of Autographed Letters and Historical Documents formed by Alfred Morrison, Second Series, The Hamilton and Nelson Letters 1736–1797 (printed for private circulation, 1893[65]). All Hamilton scholars use this invaluable source, extracting elements from it as appropriate, and it is used in the same manner here. However, the appendix to the thesis explores Morrison's collection holistically, from 1764 until the death of Catherine Hamilton in 1782, a total of 123 letters. By this means it is possible to trace the geographical location of Hamilton's correspondents, their social status and the reasons for their communications. Historians have found it difficult to access Hamilton's thoughts and motives. The appendix

[65] Alfred Morrison, *The Collection of Autographed Letters and Historical Documents formed by Alfred Morrison*, (Second Series 1882-1893) Volume 1, *The Hamilton and Nelson Letters 1736-1797,* (printed for private circulation, (1893).

contains a specific analysis of the 37 letters between the Envoy and his favourite nephew and beneficiary, Charles Greville, prior to the transfer of his mistress, 'Mrs Emma Hart', to his uncle in Naples. From the gestalt of these intimate letters, aspects of Hamilton's personality emerge in a manner distinct from his general correspondence.

Camillo Paderni's (1715–1781) letters published in the Royal Society's Philosophical Transactions help trace the growth of knowledge in Britain regarding Herculaneum and Pompeii.[66] There are many others commenting on these events. Hamilton's major contribution was his letters to the Royal Society which were to form his book Campi Phlegraei. Newspapers add information about public perception of Hamilton. The Collection of newspapers by Reverend Charles Burney (1757-1817), The 17th and 18th Century, refer to Hamilton over one hundred times during the period he was Envoy.[67]

Hamilton's research into natural philosophy was illuminated by his own scholarship. It ranged from Pliny the Younger's description of Herculaneum and Pompeii's destruction, through Athenasius Kircher's important work on volcanoes, Mundus Subterraneus (1665), to Hamilton's contemporary, Professor Horace Bénédict de Saussure

[66] Camillo Paderni's letters published in the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions*.
[67] Burney Collection; Newspapers, 17th–18th Century. http://find.gale.com/bncn/start.do?prodId=BBCN&userGroupName=lonlib (Accessed 21 09 2019).

(1740-1799). That the publication of AEGR was in the tradition of the previous antiquities folios of Bernardo Montfaucon and the Count de Caylus is apparent both in its title and references to them in Hancarville's text. Besides AEGR, the corpus of Hamilton's published works and his letters to the Royal Society demonstrate how his understanding of natural philosophy in relation to seismic phenomena grew throughout the eighteenth century.

A further vein of primary material is contemporary books which, directly or indirectly, Hamilton used. J.J. Winckelmann was an important source of knowledge on ancient art. His great work on the history of art, the Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums (1764) – 'History of Ancient Art' – remains in use to this day.[68] His vitriolic open letters, Sendschreiben von den Herculanischen Entdeckungen (1762) – 'Letter About the Discoveries at Herculaneum' – and the 'Nachrichten von den neuesten Herculanischen Entdeckungen (1764) – 'Report About the Latest Herculaneum Discoveries' – greatly influenced Hamilton.[69]

Richard Payne Knight (1751–1824) did Hamilton no service in emblazoning his name on the cover of A discourse on the Worship of Priapus, and its Connection with the Mystic Theology of the Ancients.

[68] J.J. Winckelmann, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (1764).
[69] J.J. Winckelmann, *Sendschreiben von den Herculanischen Entdeckungen* (1762) and '*Nachrichten von den neuesten Herculanischen Entdeckungen* (1764).

(1786).[70] Hamilton's contribution was a straightforward account of a priapic cult in Isernia thinly disguised as a religious rite.

The printed literature of the period offers many insights into the life of Emma and William Hamilton. Nathaniel Wraxall's Historical Memoirs of My Own Time (1815) offered a description of Hamilton in his dotage, dancing the tarantella.[71] Goethe's forensic description of Emma's attitudes in his Italian Journey (London, 1885 translation) is well known.[72] Tischbein too, offered an encomium at the time when Hamilton was close to death.

An Overview of the Thesis

In a conversation, Ian Jenkins once described Hamilton as being 'researched out' because of scholarly interest in him since Fothergill's biography was published in 1969. Nevertheless, my thesis focusses for the main part on areas about which there has been little research. The overarching aim is to situate Hamilton within his social and intellectual milieu. It raises questions of how he interacted within his peer group and where to position him within the Republic of Letters. There is also the question of how the general population understood him. It will be

[70] Richard Payne Knight, *A Discourse on the Worship of Priapus, and its Connection with the Mystic Theology of the Ancients* (1786).
[71] Nathaniel Wraxall, *Historical Memoirs of my Own Time* (1815).
[72] Wolfgang Goethe, *The Italian Journey*. W. Auden and E. Mayer, translators (Pantheon Books, New York, 1962).

seen that Hamilton does not fit easily within any one category and that his position is truly sui generis.

One constant theme is Hamilton's personal need for recognition and respect. Ian Jenkins makes this clear in his article 'Seeking the Bubble Reputation'.[73] In Naples Hamilton impressed visitors and local establishment figures alike with his cultured lifestyle and close relationship with the Royal Family. His need for recognition was further emphasise by his numerous publications, all of which had his name prominently attached to them.

Moving to specific aspects of his work, the thesis demonstrates that Hamilton's greatest success lay within the field of natural philosophy. There is a particular focus on his masterwork, Campi Phlegraei. It is an amalgam of natural philosophy, human interaction with nature and the history of the Earth. It also forms a historiography of writings past and current used within Hamilton's text. Campi Phlegraei demonstrated his dependence on knowledge workers. Separation of these elements has not been attempted before.

AEGR continues to be regarded as one of the most beautiful and important works of the eighteenth century, a perception that lacks analysis. Chapter Four of the thesis challenges that view, emphasising

[73] Ian Jenkins, 'Seeking the Bubble Reputation', *Journal of the History of Collections* (1997). Sir William Hamilton, Letter to Sir Joseph Banks, May 1785.

that it is just one of a series of folio- sized works by scholars exploring ancient art in southern Europe. What distinguished AEGR from its predecessors was the quality of the coloured plates, loosely connected with a discourse on the origin of ancient art. Yet the text is largely discrete from the images, while the plates are freestanding, with only two given an adequate explanation. The overall effect thus reduces their importance to the level of attractive images only. Consideration is given to whether Hamilton was a connoisseur collector of ancient artefacts, or a trader, whose aim was to generate a revenue stream. AEGR, together with actual vases from Hamilton's collection, were used by Wedgwood and others to speed the dissemination of Neoclassical imagery, the subject of Chapter Five. Hamilton is perceived as one who was a major influence in this regard. In the process, the different mindsets of the connoisseur and manufacturer are explored. The growth of literacy and the expansion of the middling people determined the nature of acceptable imagery. Wedgwood's mass- produced artefacts were sold at affordable prices and reflected the increasing demand for modest imagery, so different from that on actual Greek vases and the plates in AEGR. The tension between the two is analysed together with the linkage between Hamilton and Wedgwood, an area not fully explored in previous scholarship.

By 1790, Hamilton had become a recognised authority on ancient vases. He asserted authorship of CEAV, published between 1793 and 1800. Yet he received substantial help from Tischbein and others, and it will be argued that he was editor rather than author. Nevertheless, CEAV's introduction, an important contribution to vase scholarship, was entirely Hamilton's own work and it is analysed in the thesis.

Chapter Six explores three major issues. The first concerns Sir William and Emma Hamilton, who are treated as a single entity. Hamilton was the director of Emma's miming tableaux vivant, or 'Attitudes' as she termed them, her role being that of a talented actress. Yet, as the thesis demonstrates, Sir William had deeper motives in allowing Emma to perform. The second theme concerns Emma as a diplomat. Breaking gender stereotypes, she played a significant role in diplomacy as her husband's health faded, negotiating between Queen Maria Carolina, Nelson and London. In these regards she has her own place within the thesis. The third theme covered in Chapter Six is an analysis of Hamilton's fall from grace. Lady Hamilton's affair with Nelson, together with the Envoy's pliant acceptance of it, impelled London to recall him in 1799. This was linked to Hamilton's inability to cope with the complex diplomacy resulting from the Napoleonic invasions of Italy. Concurrently, the

satirists' assault on Sir William and Lady Hamilton hastened public disapprobation towards them.

An unresolved question is why the Envoy chose to undertake so much. There were undoubtedly traits in his personality that impelled him to collect and wish for recognition. Beneath the mostly calm exterior he was a restless individual. In a letter to Sir Joseph Banks (1743–1820) in May 1785 he wrote that 'As one passion begins to fail it is necessary to form another, for the whole purpose of going thru' life tolerably is to keep oneself eager about anything. . .The moment one is indifferent on s'ennyue.'[74] Hamilton's life was full of adventure and discoveries. It is a cause of regret that it took 150 years for his achievements in natural philosophy, antiquarianism and Neoclassicism to be widely recognised.

[74] Cited in Lucile Ball, 'Introduction', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 9, 2, 1997, p. 189. https://doi.org/10.1093/jhc/9.2.187 (Accessed 19 03 2019).

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Abstract

Sir William Hamilton was the British Envoy to the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily between 1764-1799. The thesis explores his interests in natural philosophy and antiquarianism. It examines his contribution to Neoclassical design and, via the Wedgwood factory, its extension to the 'middling people'. Hamilton's extraordinary network of contacts is explored throughout the text.

The thesis focusses on three major areas. The first explores his two vase collections, their publication and significance. Secondly Hamilton's empirical approach to the geology of the Neapolitan Caldera is examined. The third element considers the social changes of the late eighteenth century and their interplay with Hamilton's life and public reputation. The outcome was Hamilton's dismissal from the Naples post in 1799.

Hamilton is most commonly known and admired for the publication of his two vase collections, yet the thesis demonstrates that his contribution to them is far less than is commonly believed. The author of the first, Pierre-François Hugues, known as 'Baron d'Hancarville' published his own prehistory of ancient art under the title *Antiquités etrusques, grecques et romains, tirees du cabinet de M. Hamilton* (Naples, 1766-1776). It was not the catalogue raisonné that Hamilton's desired and funded. The outcome was a text largely unrelated to the exquisite coloured plates of ancient vases. Hamilton's *Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases Mostly of Pure Greek Workmanship* was published between 1791and 1795. He wrote an excellent introduction, but most of the work was that of Wilhelm Tischbein and Count Italinsky. Emma Hamilton's agency in publicising ancient vases via her *Attitudes* in which they featured has not previously been adequately recognised, equally true of her role as a diplomat. Hamilton and his wife cannot be separated in these respects.

Where Hamilton has been grossly underestimated, remedied in the thesis, relates to his inductive research into natural philosophy, made known to a wider public by his superb two volumed work *Campi Phlegraei*, written and published by the Envoy. The thesis demonstrates how he advanced understanding of volcanoes, seismology and charting the boundaries of the Neapolitan Caldera. Additionally, his perception of the enormity of geological time and the universality of natural scientific events is explored in a manner not previously undertaken.

In summary, Hamilton should be viewed as a significant eighteenth century figure noted for fashioning Neoclassical taste and as a major contributor towards the modern science of geology.

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Acknowledgements

The motivation for writing the thesis emerged from my enjoyment of ancient Greek vases and the small collection I have made of them over the years. As the doyen of British vase collectors, Sir William Hamilton was an inspiration and the prospect of exploring his engagement with antiquity whilst he was British Envoy to Naples provided the impetus for the thesis

It would have been an impossible task without assistance, particularly with the many languages encountered during the research. I am grateful to Christopher Galleymore and Rosemary George for their help with French and Italian, to Herr Friedrich Stephan, who translated passages from Goethe and Tischbein for me, and to Sir Martin Harris for help with Latin translation. David Stone offered valuable assistance with Hamilton's financial affairs, and credit is due to Elizabeth Stone for taking photographs from seemingly impossible angles!

Networks are a feature of the thesis which has become a discipline in its own right, and Anna Collar is to be thanked for helping me come to grips with it. My supervisors, Michael Brown and Marta García-Morcillo, have been both generous with their time and crucial in assisting me develop appropriate research skills.

Writing the thesis has been a long and often lonely process. It would not have been possible without the tolerance, patience and support of my wife.

William Hamilton (1730–1803), An Enlightenment Polymath

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) used the Latin phrase *sapere aude,* 'dare to know', to describe those who would think in new ways outside the established order. This mode of thought was characteristic of the Enlightenment.[75] In Britain It was reflected by the establishment of the British Museum in 1759, free for all to enter. Currently, memory of the Museum's foundation ideals is reflected in the Enlightenment Gallery, a testimony to a new order in which reason ruled. Within it, William Hamilton features as prominently as Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753), from whose vast collection the Museum was founded.

A huge head of a statue of Hercules dominates the Gallery's southern entrance, with the caption explaining that it was presented to the Society of Antiquaries by Hamilton in 1776 and found by him near Mount Vesuvius. This one artefact connects him not only to the antiquities he collected so voraciously, but also to the volcano whose mysteries he did so much to uncover and the learned societies of London in which he was to play such a leading role between 1763 and 1799, while he was Envoy Extraordinary in Naples. The Gallery illustrates how, by the later eighteenth century, cabinets of curiosities had become carefully catalogued collections, rather than the jumbles of artefacts that preceded them. Ken Arnold identifies the methods used to display them. They might contain a historical narrative, a focus on an individual object or a description of the function of an

[75] Roy Porter, *Enlightenment, Britain and the Creation of the Modern Word* (Penguin Press, London, 2000), Chapter 1; Edward Miller, *That Noble Cabinet: A History of the British Museum*. (Andre Deutsch, London, 1973), pp. 43–63.

exhibit. Overall, the Enlightenment Gallery demonstrates how cabinets of curiosities functioned in Hamilton's age.[76]

One display case which focusses on minerals cites Hamilton as the donor of volcanic rock specimens from the Campi Flegrei, thus identifying him with the natural philosophic study of the earth, later to develop into the science of geology.[77] Entering the Gallery from the Great Court, a visitor is immediately confronted by a display case dedicated to Hamilton. Its content illustrates his dual interest in ancient vases, both as ancient artefacts and as modern decorative objects in the work of potters, such as Josiah Wedgwood (1730–1795). A second theme within the display case is perhaps more controversial for the visitor. A miniature cork model from the early nineteenth century depicts a now lost Etruscan tomb with its roof removed, revealing the skeleton and grave goods of metal objects and pristine Greek vases surrounding it.[78] In a similar manner, Hamilton, guided by peasants with local knowledge, prised open a tomb at Trebbia near Naples. The pristine grave goods within it were removed and added to Hamilton's extensive vase and antiquities collection. To restrict treasure-hunting and to protect its antiquities, the new Kingdom of Naples and Sicily had deemed it illegal to act in such a way. Hamilton's disregard for local law demonstrates a ruthless aspect to his personality, which was normally refined and courteous. Overall, Hamilton's prominent position in the Gallery raises the question of how this youngest son of a minor aristocrat, with no inherited wealth and limited formal education, should become a person of such note throughout Europe.

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[76] Ken Arnold, *Cabinets for the Curious: Looking Back at Early English Museums* (Burlington Ashgate Publishing, Farnham, 2006).
[77] Chloe Chard and Helen Langdon, eds, *Transports: Travel, Pleasure, and Imaginative Geography, 1600–1830.* (Yale University Press, Newhaven, USA, 1966), pp. 197–198.
[78] Richard Gillespie, 'The Rise and Fall of Cork Model Collections in Britain', *Architectural History,* 60, 2017, pp. 117–146.

Within the same display case the title page of Volume II of the bilingual French and English publication of Hamilton's first vase collection is shown, a work which brought him much fame across Europe. Its title emphasised Hamilton's status, although Pierre-François Hugues, 'Baron D'Hancarville' (1719–1805) was the actual author of *Antiquités étrusques, grecques, et romaines tirées du cabinet de M. Hamilton, Envoye Extraordinaire de S. M. Britannique a la cour de Naples*. Its four volumes were published between 1767 and 1776. Overall, in this important gallery Hamilton is recorded as an antiquarian, a proto-geologist, connoisseur and member of the Republic of Letters. These copious references identify Hamilton as a person of significance within the British Enlightenment.

The title of the thesis, *Sir William Hamilton, Networks and Knowledge*, requires elucidation. Although Sir William is the focal point, the intellectual and social background to the times in which he lived are explored, contextualising the varied fields in which he operated. For example, in Chapter Three the letters of Camillo Paderni, Director of the Royal Herculaneum Museum are analysed in depth. He had the responsibility for determining which recovered ancient artefacts should be saved and which destroyed. The letters were written before Hamilton became envoy in Naples but the elite world of the Republic of Letters, which included Hamilton, would have known their content while Grand Tourists would tell of their own experiences on return to Britain. In Chapters Four and Five Hamilton's vase collections and their publications are explored within their historical context, and it is noted that people such as Josiah Wedgwood and Thomas Bentley (1731–1780) enhanced the growth of Neoclassicism through their products. They sought Hamilton's advice, which they utilised to the full. Later, from about 1785, Hamilton's relationship with Emma Hart (later Lady Hamilton) is explored within the context of her little-researched personal achievements in the field of Neoclassicism,

Romanticism and diplomacy. The final chapter considers Hamilton's decline in public esteem in Britain and Naples, within the context of both social change and the effect of the Napoleonic invasion of Italy. The thesis sets Hamilton within the shifting context of networks and knowledge in the eighteenth century.

When Hamilton was appointed Envoy to Naples in 1764, there were no obvious signs of latent talent, save for connoisseurship. He had left Westminster School aged fifteen, followed by an inconspicuous decade in the army. His mother, Lady Jane Hamilton (*born before* 1704–1754), may well have been the mistress to Frederick, Prince of Wales (1707–1751). She ensured that William was raised in close proximity to Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz son, later to become George III (1738–1820). Through such high-born connections the young Hamilton interacted with the aristocracy, both at Court and through contacts made at Westminster School. For most of his life he enjoyed the friendship of the monarch, together with other well-connected individuals. Had he been appointed to any diplomatic post other than that of Envoy to the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily, his important work exploring the natural philosophy and antiquity of the area would not have come to pass. Naples, with Vesuvius in active mode and the dramatic rediscovery of Herculaneum and Pompeii, had become Europe's epicentre of cultural and natural philosophic activity.

After the death of his first wife, Catherine, in 1782, Hamilton's life entered a second and far less stable phase. Charles Greville (1749–1809), Hamilton's favourite nephew, trafficked his mistress, the youthful Mrs Emma Hart (1765–

1815), to him.[79] She was 21 years of age on her arrival in Naples while Sir William was fifty. Thereafter the objectified Emma would add a further dimension to Hamilton's oeuvre, as he used her as a model for classicising images, both in portraits and through her talent for mime. Emma's relationship with Admiral Nelson marked the tipping-point between Emma being perceived by the public as exciting, and the cause of downright scandal requiring Hamilton's ignominious removal from his Neapolitan position in 1799. Although the thesis focusses on Emma only in relation to her cultural importance and her diplomatic significance in Hamilton's declining years, it will be shown that she was a talented person in her own right.

Hamilton's life was far from that of the conventional diplomat, transitioning on a daily basis between that of the industrious envoy to that of antiquarian connoisseur and natural historian. The thesis explores Hamilton's complex and varied interactions with persons of all social classes, from whom he frequently gained knowledge that he used to great personal advantage. Although much has been written about Hamilton in the last fifty years, there has been little analysis of the breadth of his intellectual activities and interests. The thesis is the first to employ network analysis in order to clarify the significance of Hamilton's varied relationships, which in turn acts as an aid to situate him within the wider Republic of Letters.

The title, 'Sir William Hamilton, Networks and Knowledge' is cast broadly because, as a polymath, he was involved in many facets of learning and knowledge production. His influential work, *Campi Phlegraei*, detailed the volcanic and seismic

[79] Emma, Lady Hamilton was christened as Amy Lyon. When she became Greville's mistress he insisted that she be known as Mrs Emma Hart, the name she retained until her marriage to Sir William Hamilton in 1791.

nature of the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily in a manner never previously undertaken. Likewise, the publication of his two vase collections gave a positive focus to an aspect of antiquity previously disregarded in Britain.

Hamilton reached Naples with significant background knowledge of archaeological events at Herculaneum and Pompeii. Seemingly, he had little prior knowledge of Vesuvius and the caldera surrounding it, but it intrigued him and he researched this volcanic region throughout his thirty-five-year tenure in Naples. From inquisitive amateur, he became a leading authority on what would now be termed volcanology and seismology, making significant discoveries. Concurrently, he amassed large numbers of ancient vases and published them. Hamilton's antiquarianism is an important area to analyse as these activities led to a world-wide growth in Neoclassical taste. The significance of his role as Envoy to the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily is frequently overlooked, but it underpinned his other activities by giving him access both to restricted areas and important personages.

Network Analysis and Historiography

Throughout the thesis network diagrams are inserted to contextualise the subject matter under discussion. They seek to identify Hamilton's connections with other actors chiefly through analysis of social networks. Everyday life is built on networks, from family interactions to wider agencies such as the police force, education, and health care. Duncan Watts's *Six Degrees: The Science of a Connected Age*,[80] first published in 1971, was a precursor of network analysis, indicating that in six moves one human can be connected to any other person on the planet.

[80] Duncan Watts, *Six Degrees: The Science of a Connected Age* (Heinemann, New Hampshire, 1971).

In recent decades network analysis has expanded to form global patterns, a task which was impossible before the age of super computers. *Networks* comprise sets of *actors* who may be individuals or organizations, the smallest of which consists of two persons (*dyadic ties*) and can be scaled up to include social interactions between any number of actors. They assist in the analysis of entire social entities and help explain anomalies within them. Social analysis uses *nodes* between the individual actors and the *ties*, *edges* or *links* (relationships or interactions) that connect them.

Networks help clarify change in popular perceptions. Initially, a few actors may hold a minority opinion, others may then come to share this new position. A *tipping point* occurs when a majority hold what was once the minority opinion, thus making that view mainstream. One good example explored in the thesis is that in the early eighteenth century only a minority perceived ancient vases as having Greek origins; but by 1795, when Hamilton published his second vase collection, the title began *A Collection of engravings from ancient vases mostly of pure Greek workmanship*.[81] The *tipping point* had been reached.

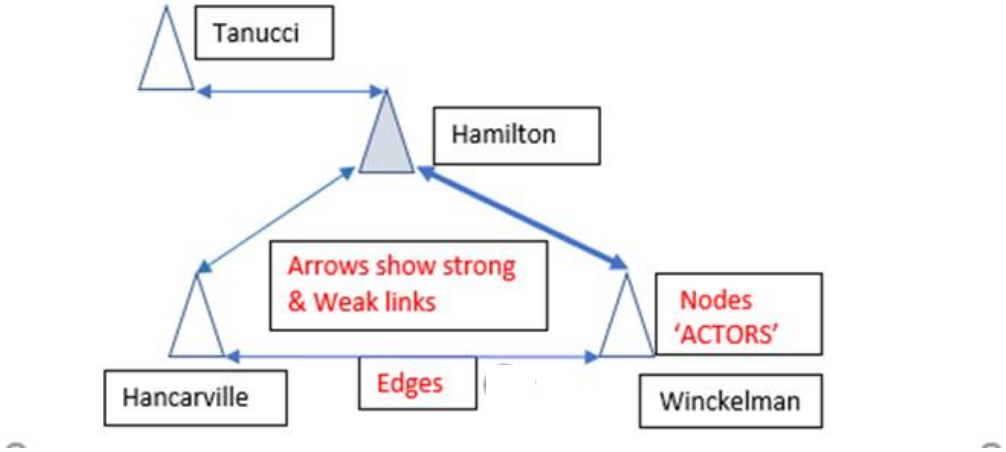
There is an extensive bibliography of works and internet resources focussing on networks. A good starting point is Charles Kadushin's *Understanding Social Networks*, in which he offers a basic description of the concepts involved. In recent years there has been a surge of interest in network approaches to historical writing, enabling scholars to move beyond traditional narratives by giving new tools to identify, map and visualise source material. The specialist vocabulary used in networks enunciates relationships, such as personal, social, commercial and ideological relationsips. A good example is to be found in *Sinews of Empire* (2017),

[81] In the thesis this work is referred to as *CEAV.*

edited by Håkon Teigen and Eivind Seland, which contains a series of thirteen essays on varied aspects of the Roman Empire using networks, demonstrating clearly how network analysis can benefit historical research of any period.[82] Currently, there is a major project using networks within an eighteenth-century context. Stanford University's project *Grand Tour Travellers*, a subset within *Mapping the Republic of Letters*, is a digital data base which developed John Ingamells's vast *Dictionary of British and Irish Travelers to Italy 1701-1800* (1997), into a digital research resource.[83] It includes references to Hamilton and those who visited him in Naples, demonstrating the frequency with which visitors arrived in the capital, who they were and the routes by which they arrived. Networking was a *sine qua non* within the Republic of Letters, made clear in Anne Goldar's important book, *Impolite Learning: Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680-1750* (1995).[84] Not only does Goldar analyse the hierarchy of members within the Republic, she also illustrates the slowness of communication between them. Hamilton might expect a communiqué to London to reach its destination in three weeks, so different from modern instantaneous communication.

[82] Teigen Håkon and Seland Eivind, eds, *Sinews of Empire*, (Oxbow Books, York, 2017).
[83] Giovanna Ceserani, http://republicofletters.stanford.edu/publications/grandtour/ (Accessed 17 09 2019).
[84] Anne Goldgar, *Impolite Learning: Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680–1750* (Yale, Yale University Press, 1995).

Network Diagram 1



An EDGE demonstrates links between ACTORS. The ARROWS show where there is linkage between them. The THICKNESS of the EDGE indicates the strength of the connection. NODES represent the ACTORS involved.

This example demonstrates Hamilton's role in bringing concerns regarding the nature of the excavations at Herculaneum and Pompeii to the attention of Prime Minister Tanucci. Hamilton's NODE is filled to show him as the principal ACTOR. Winckelmann provides most evidence, so making his EDGE stronger.

Networks are explored where there is a clear need for the relations between actors to be clarified. One such example concerns networks which allowed Hamilton to have influence on excavation techniques at Herculaneum (see *Network Diagram 1, above*). He learnt of current bad practice from scholars in Naples, accepting their arguments. Next, using his privileged access as Envoy, he mediated change with the Royal Family and Prime Minister Bernardo Tanucci (1698–1783).

Hamilton has been the subject of two major biographies emphasising different aspects of his life. In 1969 Brien Fothergill published *Sir William Hamilton, Envoy*

Extraordinary. Its preface expresses the biographer's task and the limitations of it, but also demonstrates the extraordinarily wide scope of the Envoy's interests:

> Hamilton was a many sided and versatile character. To do full justice to his activities would require the combined skills of a diplomatic and social historian, an art historian, an authority on Greek and Roman antiquities, on eighteenth-century music, on volcanology and on natural history to name but the chief of Sir William's interests.[85]

Fothergill's work focuses on Hamilton as a person, noting how the events surrounding him shaped his actions. Two decades later David Constantine, a noted Hellenist and German specialist, published *Fields of Fire, A Life of William Hamilton* (2001), using primary sources unavailable to Fothergill. While commending the earlier biography, Constantine claimed that his own would offer 'A stronger sense of Hamilton's European, particularly German connections and importance; and a greater interest in him as a writer.'[86]

In 1996 the British Museum mounted an exhibition devoted to Hamilton, displaying some of the vases, intaglios and metal objects he collected, together with his many publications. It was accompanied by a superb catalogue, *Vases and Volcanoes*, edited by Ian Jenkins and Kim Sloan,[87] which Constantine accurately described as 'a great and beautiful treasure-house of knowledge'.[88]

There has been too little research as to why the Neapolitan post attracted Hamilton. Constantine is dismissive: 'It cannot be said that Hamilton was *driven* to get to Naples. . . An opening appeared, he tried for it and got lucky.'[89] Fothergill

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[85] Brian Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton, Envoy Extraordinary.* (Nonsuch Publishing, Stroud, 1969), p. 11.
[86] David Constantine, *Fields of Fire: A life of Sir William Hamilton* (Wiedenfield & Nicolson, London, 2001), p. xxvii..
[87] Ian Jenkins and Kim Sloan, eds, *Vases and Volcanoes: Sir William Hamilton and His Collections* (British Museum Press, London, 1996).
[88] Constantine, *Fields of Fire,* p. xvii.
[89] Ibid., p. 15.

suggests that his principal motive was to remove his asthmatic wife, Catherine Hamilton, née Barlow (1738–1783) to a warm climate. It was 'Duty to his ailing wife as well as for his ambition'.[90] Although Catherine's health was a genuine matter of concern to her husband, this thesis will demonstrate that there were other important underlying reasons for the move to Naples. The Envoy's interest in fine art is considered here chiefly in relation to his trading. While it is true that his correspondence frequently refers to the purchase and sale of pictures, it does not add to the discoveries he made or to his influence in the development of Neoclassicism.

Hamilton's childhood was a lonely one, with both parents heavily involved with their own different, but busy, occupations. However, at Westminster School he developed friendships with Lord Stormont (1727–1796) and Frederick Hervey (1730–1803) who, in adulthood, would become extremely influential public figures. Later Hamilton became intimate with the circle of Horace Walpole (1717–1797). These were wealthy, university-educated connoisseurs of fine art, who had participated in the Grand Tour. Jeremy Black's account of *The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* (1992)[91] provides an account of this practice, outlining its nature and the many faceted difficulties facing the traveller. John Ingamells, *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy, 1701-1800* (1997)[92] records the journeys of many hundreds of those traveling in the eighteenth century. They offer the modern scholar an insight into the nature of travel and the difficulties faced by tourists who visited the Envoy in Naples

[90] Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton*, p. 28.
[91] Jeremy Black, *The British Abroad: The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* (Sutton Publishing, Stroud, 1992).
[92] John Ingamells, ed., *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy, 1701–1800* (Yale University Press, Yale, 1997).

Prior to his diplomatic appointment, Hamilton would have seen impressive cabinets of curiosities. Edward Miller titled his book on the history of the British Museum *That Noble Cabinet* (1973),[93] while Patrick Mauriès, *Cabinets of curiosities* (2002), describes their fascination for a world before the age of mass travel and deep scientific understanding.[94] The magnificent and widely known Farnese art collection, on display in Naples since 1734, was a further draw for an art connoisseur. Taking all these factors into account, it is unsurprising that when the Naples vacancy seemed likely, Hamilton took the initiative and proactively applied for it.[95]

Hamilton was charged by the Foreign Department in London to reconnoitre the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily with the aim of increasing trade.[96] It suited the Envoy well. He could travel without restriction, apparently fulfilling his remit, but simultaneously engage with natural philosophy and antiquarianism. There is relatively little modern scholarship relating to Hamilton and natural philosophy, while there is a far greater volume of research into his antiquarian interests.

To understand Hamilton's perception of the world around him, it is important to comprehend the nature of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century. An excellent starting point is the work by Roy Porter, *Enlightenment; Britain and the Creation of the Modern World* (2000).[97] Porter analyses the Enlightenment in a series of chapters, each of which focuses on a different aspect of the movement, enabling the reader to gain a clear understanding of the movement as a whole. Closer to Hamilton is Kim Sloan's compilation of essays, *The British Museum,*

[93] Miller, *That Noble Cabinet.*
[94] Patrick Mauriès, *Cabinets of Curiosities* (Thames and Hudson, London, 2002).
[95] British Library, Add. MS 38200, f.198.
[96] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p, 25.
[97] Porter, *Enlightenment*.

Enlightenment; Discovering the World in the Eighteenth Century (2003), published as an introduction to the opening of the Enlightenment Gallery of the British Museum. In it, Hamilton's contributions to the movement are explained in some detail. A telling sentence is 'He typifies the shift in Enlightenment thinking from a focus on natural history to a wider approach, since his own first connections with the Museum were through his gifts of examples of the productions of nature, lava from Vesuvius and fish and shells from the Bay of Naples'.[98] Thus the Envoy's natural philosophy and antiquarian endeavours are both contained within the Enlightenment Gallery.

Although Hamilton's work in the field of natural philosophy is less researched than his work on antiquity, this thesis argues that he achieved more in the former than in any other. Martin Rudwick's book *Earth's Deep History: How It Was Discovered and Why It Matters* (2016) offers a general introduction to human understanding of time, both geological and cultural.[99] More specifically, Noam Andrews's article 'Volcanic Rhythms: Sir William Hamilton's love affair with Vesuvius' contextualises Hamilton within Rudwick's broader discussion.[100] There is one attempt to engage directly with Hamilton's work and achievements. Mark Sleep, a geologist, used Hamilton's seminal work *Campi Phlegraei* to write the article, 'Sir William Hamilton, His work and Influence in geology'.[101] In it he extracts much from *Campi Phlegraei* and offers annotations to it. Sleep's article formed the

[98] Sloan, Kim, *Enlightenment: Discovering the World in the Eighteenth Century.* (British Museum Press, London, 2003), p. 21.
[99] Martin Rudwick, *Bursting the Limits of Time: The Reconstruction of GeoHistory in an Age of Revolution* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2005).
[100] Noam Andrews, 'Volcanic Rhythms: Sir William Hamilton's Love Affair with Vesuvius', *Architectural Association*, 60, 2010, pp. 9–15.
[101] Mark Sleep, 'Sir William Hamilton, His work and Influence in Geology', *Annuls of Science* 25, 4, 1969.

basis for John Thackray's 'The Modern Pliny', a chapter in *Vases and Volcanoes*.[102] Thackray devotes space to the theories of the Plutonists and Neptunists, then offers a precis of sections of *Campi Phlegraei*. The chapter ends with an analysis of how Hamilton gained the skill and confidence to make universal deductions from his previous observations. A recent addition to the understanding of Hamilton's achievements is found in Noah Herringman's work *Sciences of Antiquity: Romantic Antiquarianism, Natural History and Knowledge Work* (2013).[103] In it, a section is devoted to the production of *Campi Phlegraei*, analysing the importance of Hamilton's artist Peter Fabris (active 1740–1792). Fabris provided the important geological illustrations in Volume II, which frequently clarified Hamilton's text. Herringman will be mentioned again when discussing antiquarianism, with reference to the Envoy's simultaneous endeavours in other scholarly areas to which the discourse now passes.

Hamilton published *An Account of the Discoveries at Pompeii* (1777), a book of engravings with notes destined for the Society of Antiquarians of London.[104] It offered contemporary readers both images and notes of the state of excavations at that date. His best known publications are of the two vase collections he made. Pierre-François Hugues, known as 'Baron d'Hancarville', wrote and published the first of them. Hamilton was generously recognised on the title pages of each volume, *Collection des antiquités, étrusques, grecques et romaines, tirées du cabinet de M. Hamilton, envoyé extraordinaire de S.M.britannique en cour de Naples*.[105]

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[102] John Thackray, 'The Modern Pliny' in Jenkins, Ian and Sloan, Kim, eds, *Vases and Volcanoes: Sir William Hamilton and His Collections* (British Museum Press, London, 1996).
[103] Noah Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity: Romantic Antiquarianism, Natural History and Knowledge Work* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2013).
[104] Sir William Hamilton, *Account of the Discoveries at Pompeii Communicated to the Society of Antiquaries of London* (London, 1777).
[105] Hereafter it is referred to as *AEGR.*

AEGR was published between 1767 and 1777. Sir William claimed authorship of the catalogue to the second vase collection, with its elaborate title of *A Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases Mostly of Pure Greek Workmanship Discovered in Sepulchres in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies but Chiefly in the Neighbourhood of Naples During the Course of the years MDCCLXXXIX. and MDCCLXXXX. now in the Possession of Sir Wm Hamilton.* The publications were separated by some thirty years, and their reception differed considerably. The first vase collection was the most famous and was sold to the British Museum in 1772 for £8400, equivalent to a current value of £1,225,000.[106] Herringman observes that Hancarville and Hamilton journeyed to Paestum shortly after the new Envoy arrived. Hamilton began his first vase collection immediately after and its publication followed in short order.[107] Herringman describes Hancarville as a 'rogue antiquary'.[108] He acted as Hamilton's agent and was the author of *AEGR,* a frequent subject of discussion among scholars.[109] The scholarly community does not engage with the question of why Hamilton's collection and its publication were produced in tandem. I will argue that the vase acquisition and its publication were a joint project, masterminded by the eloquent but untrustworthy Hancarville.

In recent years, many scholarly articles have explored aspects of the collection and its publication. Claire Lyons's article 'The Neapolitan context of Hamilton's antiquities collections' contextualises Hamilton within a South Italian tradition of

[106] Figures in brackets following an eighteenth-century sum of money are taken from the Bank of England Historic Inflation Calculator. https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator (Accessed 02 02 2020).
[107] Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity.*
[108] In the thesis he is referred to as 'Hancarville'.
[109] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*; Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton*; Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*; and Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes*.

collectors,[110] while Maria Masci's article 'Birth of Ancient Vase collecting in Naples in the Early Eighteenth Century' traces how *AEGR* was in the tradition of southern European folio-sized volumes on antiquities.[111] Hancarville's text, often overlooked in favour of the splendid coloured prints it contains, is an important contribution to early theories of why art exists at all. Daniel Orrells makes this clear in 'Burying and excavating Winckelmann's History of Art'.[112] What Hamilton desired was a catalogue raisonné of his collection. Instead, Hancarville used Hamilton's significant cash input to write his own history of the origins of art. Herringman (2013) has diligently researched the production process and offered much detailed new evidence illuminating the way by which the *AEGR* project was realised.[113] The chapter is a useful reminder that *AEGR* was not a coherent work, with text and illustrations distinct from each other. Some scholars analyse small segments of *AEGR* in minute detail. The text has beautifully engraved capitals at the commencement of each section and Nancy Ramage discusses them in 'The Initial Letters in Sir William Hamilton's collection of antiquities', in which she details the work of Hancarville's talented engravers and also identifies considerable plagiarism from Italian artists.[114]

Michael Vickers, in 'Value and simplicity: eighteenth-century taste and the study of Greek vases' (*Past & Present*, 1987), supports my view that the first vase collection and *AEGR* were a unified project. He highlights the commercial aspect of *AEGR*'s publication, arguing that, in part, the work was designed to increase the

[110] Claire Lyons, 'The Neapolitan Context of Hamilton's antiquities collections', *Journal of the History of Collections,* 9, 2, 1997.
[111] Maria Masci, 'Birth of Ancient Vase Collecting in Naples in the Early Eighteenth Century, *Journal of the History of Collections,* 2007, 19.
[112] Orrells, D 'Burying and Excavating Winckelmann's History of Art', *Journal of Classical Reception*, 3, 2, 2011.
[113] Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*.
[114] Nancy Ramage, 'The Initial Letters in Sir William Hamilton's Collection of Antiquities', *Burlington Magazine* 129, July 1987.

monetary value of vases. Yet his discourse ignores Hamilton's delight in collecting, together with Hancarville's yearning to be published alongside the famed J.J. Winckelmann.[115]

A substantial quantity of Neoclassical imagery found on Wedgwood's products have their origin in *AEGR*. Josiah Wedgwood maintained close contact with the Envoy. He received early prints from *AEGR*, using them as designs for his mass-produced Neoclassical pottery. There is a substantial bibliography devoted to Wedgwood. Anthony Burton's *Josiah Wedgwood, A Biography* (1976) provides a good introduction to his life and environment and describes his rise as a manufacturing pioneer.[116] Kathleen Farrer's *Correspondence of Josiah Wedgwood*. (1906) allows the reader a personal access into his world. It demonstrates various facets of his character, from hard-nosed businessman to a softer, more aesthetic, individual.[117] Hamilton had close contact with Wedgwood, as explained in Nancy Ramage's article 'Wedgwood and Sir William Hamilton: their personal and artistic relationship'.[118] She identifies how Wedgwood liked and admired Hamilton, but allowed him no financial gain from the potter's heavy dependence on Hamilton's vases and illustrations from *AEGR*. J. Barry, in 'Consumers' passions: the middle class in eighteenth-century England', traces how imagery derived from *AEGR* reached the growing middling population in the form of cheap ceramic objects decorated with highly modified Neoclassical imagery.[119]

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[115] Michael Vickers, 'Value and Simplicity: Eighteenth-Century Taste and the Study of Greek Vases', *Past & Present* 116, August 1987.
[116] Anthony Burton, *Josiah Wedgwood, A Biography* (Andre Deutsch, London, 1976).
[117] Kathleen Farrer, *Correspondence of Josiah Wedgwood* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1906).
[118] Nancy Ramage, 'Wedgwood and Sir William Hamilton: Their Personal and Artistic Relationship', *The Consumer Revolution in 18th Century English Pottery*, Thirty-Fifth Annual Wedgwood International Seminar (Birmingham, Alabama, 1990).
[119] J. Barry, J., 'Consumers' Passions: The Middle Class in Eighteenth–century England', *The Historical Journal* 34, 1, 1991.

From *circa* 1785 newly opened Etruscan tombs in areas around Naples led to major acquisitions of the ancient vases left within them as grave goods. Hamilton began to collect again, this time on an even grander scale than previously. *Figure 25.2* is taken from the frontispiece to *CEAV*, itself illustrating Hamilton's entanglement with Emma. He published this second collection, but this time he claimed to be author, not patron. In terms of modern scholarship, less has been published about the second collection of vases. Descriptions of them are offered in the biographies written by Fothergill and Constantine, while Ian Jenkins contributes a detailed description of the production process in *Vases and Volcanoes* (1996)[120]. Herringman rightly argues that It is too simple to accept Hamilton as the author of *CEAV* in the conventional sense, as he used Wilhelm Tischbein (1751–1829) more as editor than publisher.[121]

AEGR was a work designed for the elite of the mid-eighteenth century, but in the decade of the 1790s the context for the publication of *CEAV* had changed (*see Figure 31*). The emerging Evangelical Revival contained within it strong strictures against sexual sin. Its adherents believed that the human form should be displayed fully clothed. This religious dimension is helpfully discussed in William Gibson and Joanne Begiato, *Sex and the Church in the Long Eighteenth Century* (2017).[122] Thora Brylowe demonstrates that *CEAV* has none of the priapic illustrations of *AEGR,* for now the imagery is restrained much, as on Wedgwood's products.[123] She distinguished between the two vase collections, noting that the images in *CEAV*

[120] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton* and Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes.*
[121] Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity.*
[122] William Gibson and Joanne Begiato, *Sex and the Church in the Long Eighteenth Century* (2017).
[123] Thora Brylowe, 'Two Kinds of Collection: Sir William Hamilton's Vases Real and Represented'. *Eighteenth Century Life*', 32, 1, 2008.

were drawings only, remote from actual vases. Shortly after Sir William's death, some of Hamilton's vase illustrations were reproduced as *Thomas Kirk, Outlines from the Figures and Compositions upon the Greek, Roman and Etruscan Vases of the Late Sir William Hamilton* (1804).[124] Drawings of genitalia were expunged from all the images Kirk used in this book (*See Figure 31.3*).

Hamilton's dependence on collaborators in the production of *CEAV* has been noted. Wilhelm Tishbein, the editor of the four volumes, recorded his role in *Aus meinem Leben* (1861).[125] Furthermore, to encourage a wider circulation *CEAV* was produced cheaply, containing black and white images of scenes from vases. Hamilton insisted that its price reflected his desire to make the images more accessible to poor artists who might develop them further. [126] The very title – *A Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases Mostly of Pure Greek Workmanship* demonstrated that Hamilton had nailed his colours firmly to the mast of the vases having Greek origin, an increasingly common view as the eighteenth century progressed. Claire Lyons confirms their Greek origins in 'Nola and the historiography of Greek vases', developing the theme further to discuss the prevailing idea that vase painters copied the works of master artists from the Classical period.[127]

Hamilton's reputation as a distinguished scholar should have been cemented by the publication of *CEAV*. It was not to be. In the final decade of his life, his status was diminished by the scandalous affair between Emma and Admiral Nelson. Amidst the comprehensive literature concerning Nelson and the Hamiltons, John

[124] Thomas Kirk, *Outlines from the Figures and Compositions upon the Greek, Roman and Etruscan Vases of the Late Sir William Hamilton* (1804).
[125] Wilhelm Tishbein, *Aus meinem Leben*, (Braunschweig, 1861).
[126] Claire Lyons, 'Nola and the Historiography of Greek Vases,' *Journal of the History of Collections* (2012).
[127] Ibid.

Sugden's *Nelson: A Dream of Glory* (2005) provides a scholarly biography, which contextualises Hamilton and Emma within the larger canvas of Nelson's life.[128] Early biographies frequently portray the Admiral as an unsullied hero, the best example of this is Southey's *Life of Nelson.*[129] Roger Knight, in *The Pursuit of Victory* (*2006*)*,* comments that 'Southey constructed an early-nineteenth century hero as a model for the young [as] a "patriotic manual"'.[130] Southey's work is helpful only in understanding the hero cult of Nelson, which persisted long after his death. A helpful biography of Emma forms the concluding chapter of Quentin Colville and Kate Williams, *Emma Hamilton: Seduction and Celebrity* (2016).[131] It describes Emma's life after Hamilton's death as one of public ridicule and penury, proceeding to analyse her perception from her death to the present day through correspondence, books and modern media, matters beyond the scope of the thesis.

My assertion is that scandal apart, Lady Hamilton has considerable importance in her own right, as artist, fashion setter and diplomat. Barry Gough wrote a threnody for Emma in *That Hamilton Woman: Emma and Nelson* (2016).[132] It details her relationship with Nelson and its disastrous consequences for both Sir William and Emma. In stark contrast, the exhibition devoted to her at Greenwich in 2016 moved the focus to the many positive factors in her life. Colville and Williams move the locus from scandal to a consideration of her many talents, and their introduction is aptly entitled 'Reimagining Emma Hamilton'.[133] She was instrumental in modifying dress styles from the cumbersome late Rococo to the far simpler and more practical

[128] John Sugden, *Nelson: A Dream of Glory* (Pimlico, London, 2005).
[129] R. Southey, *The Life of Nelson*, (W. P. Nimmo, Edinburgh, 1886).
[130] Roger Knight, *The Pursuit of Victory* (Penguin Books, London, 2006).
[131] Quentin Colville and Kate Williams, *Emma Hamilton*
[132] Barry Gough, *That Hamilton Woman: Emma and Nelson* (Seaforth Publishing Barnsley, 2016).
[133] Colville and Williams, *Emma Hamilton*. *: Seduction and Celebrity* (Thames and Hudson, London, 2016).

dress la grecque, a view backed by Elizabeth Wilson and Amy de la Heye, in *Defining Dress; Dress as Object, Meaning and Identity* (2000).[134] The style gave women far more freedom of movement in their daily lives.

As the 1790s progressed, the Envoy became a much weakened figure in all ways. He was frequently sick, diplomatically out of his depth and ever more dependent on Emma, who now had her own agenda alongside Nelson and Queen Maria Carolina. Naples, for so long a diplomatic backwater, became an important theatre of war during the period of the French invasion of Italy.[135] Chief amongst the actors involved in Naples were Queen Maria Carolina and her first minister, John Acton (1736–1811), Sir William and Lady Hamilton and Admiral Nelson. Lesser figures who played a role were King Ferdinand of Naples and Captain Foote (1767–1833), who commanded the British naval squadron in Naples before Nelson's arrival.

Nelson's wartime correspondence is considerable. *The Letters and Dispatches of Horatio Nelson* record all known official correspondence with him.[136] Its content is too wide ranging for this thesis. Far more focussed is John Davis and Giovanni Capuano, *The Hamilton Letters: The Naples Dispatches of Sir William Hamilton*, covering the period from 1797 to 1799.[137] It enables salient primary source material to be utilised in analysing the complex issues involved. Constantine gives the title 'Wreck and Disgrace, 1798-1800' to his chapter detailing the events

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[134] Elizabeth Wilson and Amy de la Heye, *Defining Dress: Dress as Object, Meaning and Identity* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2000).
[135] The political background is well summarised by an article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 'Adams. J & Foot J. 'Revolution, restoration, and unification; the French Revolutionary Period' (in Italy) https://www.britannica.com/event/French-Revolution (Accessed 09 10 2018).
[136] Nelson, *The War Times Journal* (1996-2003). Author unstated. http://www.wtj.com/archives/nelson/
(Accessed 15/4/2019)
(Accessed 01 11 2019). Nelson, 'The Letters and Dispatches of Horatio Nelson '
[137] John Davis and Giovanni Capuano, *The Hamilton Letters: The Naples' Dispatches of Sir William Hamilton* (I. B. Taurus, London, 2008).

relevant to this thesis. It well summarises the position of Hamilton, who was recalled to London in 1799.

Sir William's plight had been worsened by the prurient interest of the satirists. Vic Gatrell, in *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (2006), devotes a chapter to James Gillray (1767-1833), in which he contextualises him within the social nexus of the age. Gatrell says that much of Gillray's output was 'Hack works in a diversity of styles but the best of his work married his academic training with an eye for exaggeration'.[138] The statement is certainly true for *Figure 30.1,* while *Figures 27, 30.1, 30.2, 30.3* illustrate his work alongside that of Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827) and Isaac Cruikshank (1764–1811). All three used aspects of Hamilton's last years in Naples to mock him as impotent and senile, while Emma's skills are derided and she is portrayed as a mere sexual object. The vases and statues in their prints are used as a trope for moral decadence.

Primary Source Material

The previous section demonstrates that while the secondary source material is extremely valuable in illuminating many aspects of Hamilton's work, it is the vast quantity of primary sources that make the thesis possible. Hamilton, a man of letters, left behind him a vast archive, now scattered throughout Britain and Europe. The manuscript sources used in the thesis are the National Archives at Kew, which contain Hamilton's diplomatic correspondence; the British Library; Keele University and material in the Wedgwood Museum; the John Rylands Library, which houses an archive of letters from the Envoy's niece, Mary Hamilton; the British Museum, for papers relating to Hamilton's publications; and the Slebech File

[138] Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (Atlantic Books, London, 2006).

in the Haverfordwest Public Library, which documents the accounts of his estates in Wales.

Of special importance is *The Collection of Autographed Letters and Historical Documents formed by Alfred Morrison, Second Series, The Hamilton and Nelson Letters 1736–1797* (printed for private circulation, 1893[139]). All Hamilton scholars use this invaluable source, extracting elements from it as appropriate, and it is used in the same manner here. However, the appendix to the thesis explores Morrison's collection holistically, from 1764 until the death of Catherine Hamilton in 1782, a total of 123 letters. By this means it is possible to trace the geographical location of Hamilton's correspondents, their social status and the reasons for their communications. Historians have found it difficult to access Hamilton's thoughts and motives. The appendix contains a specific analysis of the 37 letters between the Envoy and his favourite nephew and beneficiary, Charles Greville, prior to the transfer of his mistress, 'Mrs Emma Hart', to his uncle in Naples. From the gestalt of these intimate letters, aspects of Hamilton's personality emerge in a manner distinct from his general correspondence.

Camillo Paderni's (1715–1781) letters published in the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions* help trace the growth of knowledge in Britain regarding Herculaneum and Pompeii.[140] There are many others commenting on these events. Hamilton's major contribution was his letters to the Royal Society which were to form his book *Campi Phlegraei*. Newspapers add information about public perception of Hamilton. The *Collection of newspapers by Reverend Charles Burney*

[139] Alfred Morrison, *The Collection of Autographed Letters and Historical Documents formed by Alfred Morrison*, (Second Series 1882-1893) Volume 1, *The Hamilton and Nelson Letters 1736-1797,* (printed for private circulation, (1893).
[140] Camillo Paderni's letters published in the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions*.

(1757-1817), The 17th and 18th Century, refer to Hamilton over one hundred times during the period he was Envoy.[141]

Hamilton's research into natural philosophy was illuminated by his own scholarship. It ranged from Pliny the Younger's description of Herculaneum and Pompeii's destruction, through Athenasius Kircher's important work on volcanoes, *Mundus Subterraneus* (1665), to Hamilton's contemporary, Professor Horace Bénédict de Saussure (1740-1799). That the publication of *AEGR* was in the tradition of the previous antiquities folios of Bernardo Montfaucon and the Count de Caylus is apparent both in its title and references to them in Hancarville's text. Besides *AEGR, t*he corpus of Hamilton's published works and his letters to the Royal Society demonstrate how his understanding of natural philosophy in relation to seismic phenomena grew throughout the eighteenth century.

A further vein of primary material is contemporary books which, directly or indirectly, Hamilton used. J.J. Winckelmann was an important source of knowledge on ancient art. His great work on the history of art, the *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (1764) – 'History of Ancient Art' – remains in use to this day.[142] His vitriolic open letters, *Sendschreiben von den Herculanischen Entdeckungen* (1762) – 'Letter About the Discoveries at Herculaneum' – and the '*Nachrichten von den neuesten Herculanischen Entdeckungen* (1764) – 'Report About the Latest Herculaneum Discoveries' – greatly influenced Hamilton.[143] Richard Payne Knight (1751–1824) did Hamilton no service in emblazoning his name on the cover of *A discourse on the Worship of Priapus, and its Connection with the Mystic Theology of*

[141] Burney Collection; Newspapers, 17th–18th Century. http://find.gale.com/bncn/start.do?prodId=BBCN&userGroupName=lonlib (Accessed 21 09 2019).

[142] J.J. Winckelmann, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (1764).

[143] J.J. Winckelmann, *Sendschreiben von den Herculanischen Entdeckungen* (1762) and '*Nachrichten von den neuesten Herculanischen Entdeckungen* (1764).

the Ancients. (1786).[144] Hamilton's contribution was a straightforward account of a priapic cult in Isernia thinly disguised as a religious rite.

The printed literature of the period offers many insights into the life of Emma and William Hamilton. Nathaniel Wraxall's *Historical Memoirs of My Own Time* (1815) offered a description of Hamilton in his dotage, dancing the tarantella.[145] Goethe's forensic description of Emma's attitudes in his *Italian Journey* (London, 1885 translation) is well known.[146] Tischbein too, offered an encomium at the time when Hamilton was close to death.

An Overview of the Thesis

In a conversation, Ian Jenkins once described Hamilton as being 'researched out' because of scholarly interest in him since Fothergill's biography was published in 1969. Nevertheless, my thesis focusses for the main part on areas about which there has been little research. The overarching aim is to situate Hamilton within his social and intellectual milieu. It raises questions of how he interacted within his peer group and where to position him within the Republic of Letters. There is also the question of how the general population understood him. It will be seen that Hamilton does not fit easily within any one category and that his position is truly *sui generis*.

One constant theme is Hamilton's personal need for recognition and respect. Ian Jenkins makes this clear in his article 'Seeking the Bubble Reputation'.[147] In Naples Hamilton impressed visitors and local establishment figures alike with his

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[144] Richard Payne Knight, *A Discourse on the Worship of Priapus, and its Connection with the Mystic Theology of the Ancients* (1786).
[145] Nathaniel Wraxall, *Historical Memoirs of my Own Time* (1815).
[146] Wolfgang Goethe, *The Italian Journey*. W. Auden and E. Mayer, translators (Pantheon Books, New York, 1962).
[147] Ian Jenkins, 'Seeking the Bubble Reputation', *Journal of the History of Collections* (1997). Sir William Hamilton, Letter to Sir Joseph Banks, May 1785.

cultured lifestyle and close relationship with the Royal Family. His need for recognition was further emphasise by his numerous publications, all of which had his name prominently attached to them.

Moving to specific aspects of his work, the thesis demonstrates that Hamilton's greatest success lay within the field of natural philosophy. There is a particular focus on his masterwork, *Campi Phlegraei*. It is an amalgam of natural philosophy, human interaction with nature and the history of the Earth. It also forms a historiography of writings past and current used within Hamilton's text. *Campi Phlegraei* demonstrated his dependence on knowledge workers. Separation of these elements has not been attempted before.

AEGR continues to be regarded as one of the most beautiful and important works of the eighteenth century, a perception that lacks analysis. Chapter Four of the thesis challenges that view, emphasising that it is just one of a series of folio-sized works by scholars exploring ancient art in southern Europe. What distinguished *AEGR* from its predecessors was the quality of the coloured plates, loosely connected with a discourse on the origin of ancient art. Yet the text is largely discrete from the images, while the plates are freestanding, with only two given an adequate explanation. The overall effect thus reduces their importance to the level of attractive images only. Consideration is given to whether Hamilton was a connoisseur collector of ancient artefacts, or a trader, whose aim was to generate a revenue stream.

AEGR, together with actual vases from Hamilton's collection, were used by Wedgwood and others to speed the dissemination of Neoclassical imagery, the subject of Chapter Five. Hamilton is perceived as one who was a major influence in this regard. In the process, the different mindsets of the connoisseur and manufacturer are explored. The growth of literacy and the expansion of the

middling people determined the nature of acceptable imagery. Wedgwood's mass-produced artefacts were sold at affordable prices and reflected the increasing demand for modest imagery, so different from that on actual Greek vases and the plates in *AEGR*. The tension between the two is analysed together with the linkage between Hamilton and Wedgwood, an area not fully explored in previous scholarship.

By 1790, Hamilton had become a recognised authority on ancient vases. He asserted authorship of *CEAV*, published between 1793 and 1800. Yet he received substantial help from Tischbein and others, and it will be argued that he was editor rather than author. Nevertheless, *CEAV's* introduction, an important contribution to vase scholarship, was entirely Hamilton's own work and it is analysed in the thesis.

Chapter Six explores three major issues. The first concerns Sir William and Emma Hamilton, who are treated as a single entity. Hamilton was the director of Emma's miming *tableaux vivant*, or 'Attitudes' as she termed them, her role being that of a talented actress. Yet, as the thesis demonstrates, Sir William had deeper motives in allowing Emma to perform. The second theme concerns Emma as a diplomat. Breaking gender stereotypes, she played a significant role in diplomacy as her husband's health faded, negotiating between Queen Maria Carolina, Nelson and London. In these regards she has her own place within the thesis. The third theme covered in Chapter Six is an analysis of Hamilton's fall from grace. Lady Hamilton's affair with Nelson, together with the Envoy's pliant acceptance of it, impelled London to recall him in 1799. This was linked to Hamilton's inability to cope with the complex diplomacy resulting from the Napoleonic invasions of Italy. Concurrently, the satirists' assault on Sir William and Lady Hamilton hastened public disapprobation towards them.

An unresolved question is why the Envoy chose to undertake so much. There were undoubtedly traits in his personality that impelled him to collect and wish for recognition. Beneath the mostly calm exterior he was a restless individual. In a letter to Sir Joseph Banks (1743–1820) in May 1785 he wrote that 'As one passion begins to fail it is necessary to form another, for the whole purpose of going thru' life tolerably is to keep oneself eager about anything. . .The moment one is indifferent on s'ennyue.'[148] Hamilton's life was full of adventure and discoveries. It is a cause of regret that it took 150 years for his achievements in natural philosophy, antiquarianism and Neoclassicism to be widely recognised.

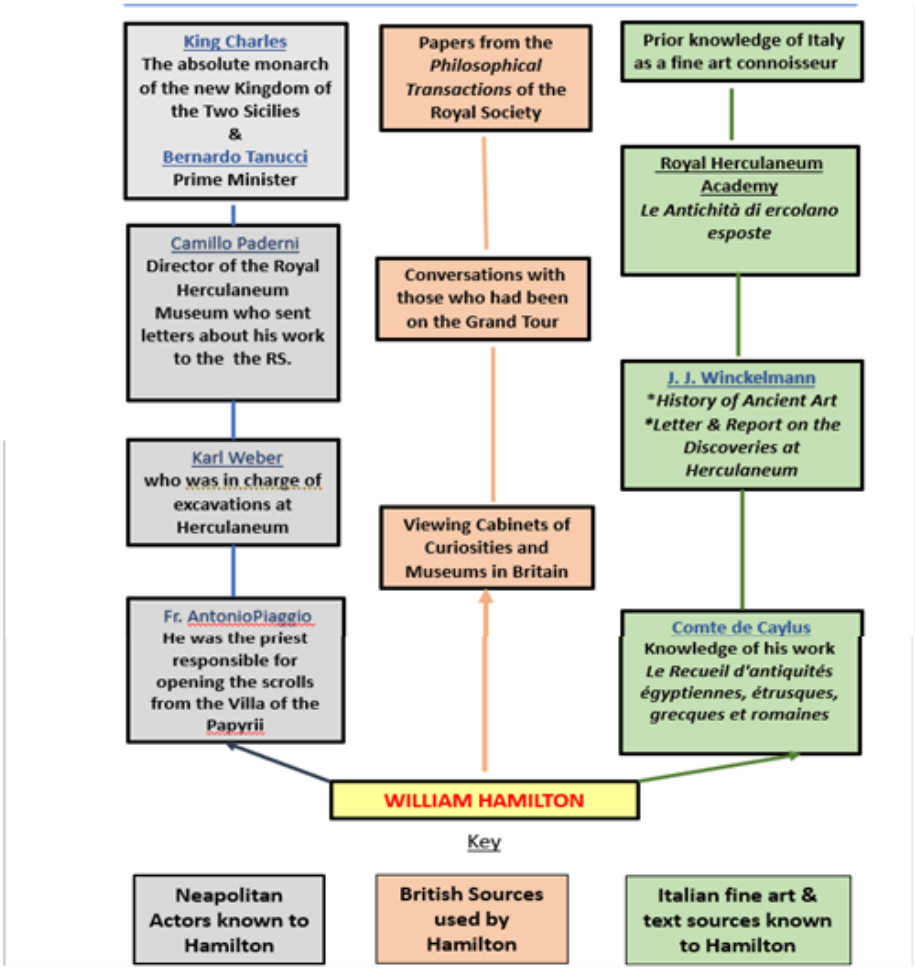
[148] Cited in Lucile Ball, 'Introduction', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 9, 2, 1997, p. 189. https://doi.org/10.1093/jhc/9.2.187 (Accessed 19 03 2019).

Chapter One

Choosing Naples

The chapter demonstrates that while many scholars assert that Hamilton's prior knowledge of events in Naples was slight, this is not the case. *Network Diagram 2*, shown below, illustrates that before his appointment to Naples he had gained considerable knowledge of events there. It will be demonstrated that he learned much about Herculaneum and Pompeii from the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, discussions with those who had been on the Grand Tour, and the extensive reading he undertook before and during his journey to Naples after his appointment.

Network Diagram 2. Hamilton's Knowledge of Antiquities in the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily prior to his arrival in Naples



Hamilton's Early Years and the Factors leading him to become Envoy

The chain of events which led William Hamilton from an insignificant army career to become the senior British citizen resident in the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily is in part serendipitous, but also a consequence of his actively seeking the post of Envoy. This first section explores Hamilton's background and then analyses his motivation for applying for the Naples post.

There is scant information regarding Hamilton's childhood, but the picture becomes clearer during his late adolescence because some of his correspondence has been preserved. It includes the orderly books from his regiment for the years between 1747 and 1758, together with a few letters recorded in Arthur Morrison's *Autographed Collection of Letters* (1893). [149] They allow his collecting habit to be traced to an early age. This section concludes with evidence demonstrating that Hamilton was knowledgeable about events in Naples long before his appointment. The second section of the chapter considers the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily in relation to its neighbours. The Kingdom was proud of its Greek antecedents and they are discussed as part of its heritage.[150]

William Hamilton's mother, Lady Jane Hamilton (1704–1752), was a forceful social climber, and First Lady of the Bedchamber in the Court of Frederick, Prince of Wales (1707–1751). There were persistent rumours that she was the Prince's mistress, an opinion which Hamilton's close friend Horace Walpole stated as fact.[151] Hamilton's father, Lord Archibald Hamilton (1673–1754) was a man with a colourful

[149] Bodleian Library, GB 161 MSS. Eng. hist. g. 3-16; Eng. misc. e. 105

[150] The Kingdom of Naples and Sicily was frequently referred to as The Kingdom of the two Sicilies and Hamilton frequently refers to King Ferdinand as 'His Sicilian Majesty'. However, it was not the formal title until 1816.

[151] W.S. Lewis and Ralph Brown, eds., *Horace Walpole's Correspondence with George Montagu*, Hathi Trust Digital Library (1941), p. 76.

naval background, including service as Governor of Jamaica. He was a Member of Parliament between 1708 and 1747, concurrently serving on the Board of the Admiralty. What cannot be known is how they regarded their fifth child, William. Hamilton recorded little about his parents, but did observe that his father 'Gave up twenty years before he died, calling himself a dying man.'[152] Lord Archibald was eclipsed by his wife and according to Lord Frederick Hervey (1730-1803) was 'cut out to play the passive character his wife and the Prince graciously allowed him'.[153] William was raised between the Prince of Wales's London home and Park Place, near Henley. In 1738 the Prince and Princess of Wales had a son, George (1738-1820), later to become King George III. Lady Hamilton used her closeness to the Prince and Princess to ensure that her eight-year-old son William spent as much time as possible with him. Hamilton later described the Monarch as his 'foster brother', and a special relationship with George III offered him protection and patronage until the scandal-ridden last years of his life. As the fifth of six children, Hamilton had no prospects of significant inherited wealth, and inevitably would need to fend for himself. Brian Fothergill quotes him as remarking, 'I was born with an ancient name and a thousand pounds.'[154]

He was enrolled at Westminster School aged nine, leaving at fifteen with the knowledge gained from a curriculum heavily focused on Greek and Latin. Concurrently, his love of fine art may well have begun alongside his schoolboy friendship with Frederick Hervey, later to become the immensely rich Bishop of Derry and Earl of Bristol. Whereas Hervey continued to Cambridge and enjoyed the

[152] R. Sedgwick and John Hervey, *Some Material towards Memoirs of the Reign of George II*, Vol. II, 475 (London, 1931).
[153]Fothergill, Brian, *Sir William Hamilton Envoy Extraordinary, (Nonsuch Press, Stroud 1969)*, p 17.
[154] Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton*, p. 21.

Grand Tour, Hamilton spent a decade in the army where he was not highly regarded and held the rank of lieutenant after a decade of service between 1747 and 1758. As promotion was mostly by payment, it points to Hamilton having limited financial resources. Eric Robson commented:

> So high were prices of commissions to the higher grades that poor men, without influence and interest, unless they had an opportunity of distinguishing themselves in action, often had to remain for life in the lower ranks of lieutenant or captain.[155]

A further useful connection was with a fellow officer, Henry Seymour Conway (1721–1795), who introduced Hamilton to the group of connoisseurs surrounding Horace Walpole.[156]

Hamilton's military experience can be divided into active service, during which he acquired field skills and a love of outdoor life, and cultured leisure, mostly spent in a vibrant London. During long periods of military inactivity, he developed artistic connoisseurship, in addition to becoming an expert violinist, taught by maestro Felice de Gardini (1716–1796). This tranche of skills was fully engaged in the years at Naples, while the Greek and Latin acquired in his schooldays proved useful. Even so, he was never confident in using classical languages, confiding to William Beckford (1760–1844), 'From my early entry into the army, my classical education is very scanty.'[157]

By 1756 two paths lay before him. He could remain in the army and hope for further promotion (although at a significant risk of being killed in action) or take an entirely different route which would allow his growing interests in fine art, antiquaries and antiquarianism to flourish. Furthering his already extensive

[155] Eric Robson, 'Purchase and Promotion in the British Army in the Eighteenth Century', *History, New Series* 36, 126/127, June 1951, pp. 57-72.
[156] Seymour was Walpole's cousin.
[157] Bodleian MS, Beckford, c. 31. F.119.

networks, after resigning his army commission in 1758, Hamilton became Member of Parliament for the notoriously rotten borough of Midhurst. There is no evidence to suggest he ever spoke in the Commons, although it was a useful adjunct for further networking. It was connoisseurship that dominated his interests, enhanced by becoming a part of Horace Walpole's circle. Life in London held many attractions. Some sense of it can be gained from Charles Lamb's account of the City:

> The lighted shops of the Strand and Fleet Street, the innumerable trades and customers, playhouses. . . the print shops the old book stalls, coffee houses. . . London itself is a pantomime and a masquerade – all these things work themselves into my mind and feed me with a power of satiating me.[158]

There was also a thoughtful side to the young Hamilton. The improvement of design expressed through Neoclassicism, was a lifelong passion for him. In 1758 he was elected to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce, founded in 1754. James 'Athenian' Stuart (1713–1788), part author of *The Antiquities of Athens and Other Monuments of Greece,* (1762) acted as his sponsor (see *Figure 16*).[159]

Seemingly, prior to marriage Hamilton was regarded as something of a rake by his peers. An illuminating letter to him from Lord Fortrose (1744–1781) offers an insight. He wrote, 'It takes some time to be sure that a rake is reformed, though I will appeal to Mrs. Hamilton if, according to the proverb, they do not make the best husbands.'[160] Lord Pembroke (1734–1794) opined 'Your chastity merits to be recorded to future ages . . . Tell me honestly how long do you think it will last?'[161] To achieve some stability in his life, Hamilton chose a common path amongst noble

[158] Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, p.33.
[159] James Stuart and Nicholas Revett were British architects who recorded ancient sites in Athens and its environs between 1751 to 1754.
[160] BM. Add. MS. 51315, f.18.
[161] Pembrokeshire Archives and Local Studies, Barlow Family records, I, 37.

born younger sons, marrying an heiress, Catherine Barlow (1738–1782). It was a marriage of convenience but proved to be stable and happy. Decades later he confided to his nephew Charles Greville that:

> A disagreeable rich devil, the Devil himself could not have tempted me to marry but I have found a lasting comfort in having married, somewhat against my will, a virtuous, good tempered woman with a little independent fortune to which we could fly should other dependencies fail, and live decently without being obliged to anyone.[162]

The letter is important in that it demonstrates the calm dignity and integrity by which the Hamilton household was organised by Catherine, shown in visual form by *Figure 2.* It is in stark contrast with the flamboyant and later chaotic domestic situation he endured with his second wife, Lady Emma Hamilton, after their marriage in 1791. Catherine's mother described her as 'A poor, nervous creature, delicate, pious, who played the harpsichord and enjoyed a rent-roll of £5,000 (£345,000) a year.'[163] As will be seen, Catherine's ill health was one factor in determining Hamilton to apply for the Envoy's post in Naples.

The opportunity for William Hamilton to change his life from country gentleman and city *bon vivant* occurred in 1763 when Sir James Gray (1708–1775) resigned as Envoy in Naples, a post he had held since 1753.[164] Some modern scholars assume that before arriving in Naples, Hamilton's knowledge base was slight. John Thackray goes further, maintaining that 'it was unlikely that Hamilton had any detailed knowledge [of the previous literature regarding events around Naples] before he went there'.[165] Contrary to this view, there is considerable evidence to support my contention that Hamilton had significant prior knowledge of events in Naples. His

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[162] Morrison, Letter 95. Hamilton to Greville, 12. 09. 1780.

[163] Jones, Frederick 'Lloyd of Cilciffeth: The Families of the Gwaun Valley', *The Pembrokeshire Historian* 4, 1972, p. 61.

[164] He was a member of the Society of Dilettanti, perhaps suggesting that the Neapolitan envoy should have an interest in antiquities.

[165] Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes*, p. 66.

friends who had completed the Grand Tour would recount their experiences, while newspapers reported events in Naples. One example from the *Penny London Post* made it a feature:

> As we had lately an Account from Naples of some new discoveries in relation to the ancient City of Heraclea which was destroyed above 1600 years ago by an Earthquake.. . . The following letters in Confirmation of that Account cannot be but acceptable to our Readers [sic].[166]

In cabinets of curiosities he would have seen some ancient vases, possibly including those of Sir James Gray, his predecessor. The six letters of Camillo Paderni (1720–1770) to the Royal Society, concerning excavations in Herculaneum and Pompeii, were readily available.[167] After Hamilton's appointment and prior to leaving London he had scoured the diplomatic archives for knowledge of the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily.[168] En route to Naples, Hamilton read Johann Joachim Winckelmann's (1717–1768) latest highly critical letters on the excavations of the Buried Cities.[169]

Hamilton's desire to go to Naples was recorded. In a second attempt to secure the post he wrote a proactive letter to Lord Bute's (1713–1792) undersecretary, Charles Jenkinson (1729–1808), in which his tone is close to pleading:

> The last time I took the liberty of troubling Lord Bute *about an affair I have very much to heart*, both on account of Mrs Hamilton's ill state of health *and of my own situation*, his Lordship was good enough as to say that he would turn it over in his mind. . . Will you be so kind as to let Lord Bute know from me that I understand that Sir James Grey will be home very soon and have reason to believe that he does not mean to return to Naples [Author's italics].[170]

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[166] *Penny London Post* or *The Morning Advertiser* (London, England), *17th-18th Century Burney Collection of Newspapers*, Issue 809 (July 18, 1748).
[167] Paderni's letters read to the Royal Society cover a decade of excavation.
[168] Bodleian Library Archive, *Notebooks of extracts made by Hamilton in 1764 from Sir James Gray's correspondence with secretaries of state when envoy to Naples, 1754-64.*
[169] The term 'Buried Cities' is used to refer to the archaeological exploration within the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily. Evidence of his reading Winckelmann's work before he arrived in Naples. See Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 17.
[170] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 14.

Without doubt Mrs Hamilton's health was one reason for the request, but the phrases 'very much to heart' and 'of my own situation' imply other motivations, with aspirations that went beyond those of becoming a diplomat. Apart from Catherine Hamilton's fortune, he enjoyed an additional income as equerry to King George III. After his marriage, Hamilton's financial situation was secure, which implies that he had other motives which made him eager to secure the post.

Hamilton was always concerned about his social status, and the Envoy's post would make him the most important British citizen in the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily. What Constantine referred to as 'luck' seems unlikely. His relationship with George III gave him a powerful sponsor. With Hamilton's extensive networks and his reputation as an art connoisseur, it is unsurprising that he was appointed to what, in 1764, was an insignificant diplomatic post. Overall, the vacant post of Envoy at Naples filled his requirements, both in terms of status and his interest in fine art and antiquities, particularly as it was a salaried position of £1,825 (£345,000) annually which, added to his wife's income, would allow him to collect extensively. In terms of collecting in Europe's third most populous city, Naples, he would be at the centre of the fine art and antiquities markets and a cultural hub filled with collectors, dilettanti and intellectuals.[171]

Hamilton's drive to collect began in his adolescence and continued throughout his life. It was not restricted to art and antiquity in that there was a further sense in which he 'collected', shown by his passion for Mount Vesuvius and the caldera on which Naples is built. Noah Herringman cites Kevin Nevers, who perceived Hamilton as one who 'At once endorses and enforces a colonialist agenda on human

[171] Scholars such as Carlo Antonini, Winckelmann and D'Hancarville were in Naples on the arrival of Hamilton. See G. Ceserani, *Italy's Lost Greece: Magna Graecia and the Making of Modern Archaeology*. (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2012), pp. 49–60.

hegemony.' David Nolta described Hamilton as 'stamping his collector's mark on the actual landscaped settings described'.[172] Vesuvius was to occupy him throughout his Naples years, demonstrated by the rock samples he gathered from it and his pleasure at being in the mountain's vicinity. One of Hamilton's residences was the Villa Angelica**,** termed by him the 'sweet house at Portici', at the foot of Vesuvius, mainly used as his base for viewing the mountain. Overall, his passion for the mountain radiates throughout *Campi Phlegraei*. [173]

Even Emma Hamilton might also be understood as a collected object. Hamilton, during the correspondence with Charles Greville concerning her transfer to Naples, described her as 'so delightful an object'.[174] Such objectification was given further weight by Horace Walpole's (1717–1797) witty comment in a letter to Miss Berry, 'Sir William Hamilton has actually married his gallery of statues and they are set out on their return to Naples. . . I shall not be so generous to my wife as Sir William and exhibit my wife in pantomime to the public.'[175]

Hamilton's assiduous collecting derived from an aspect of his persona, in which objects collected became a part of him. A modern psychologist, Bill Brown, considered the delight felt by collectors, stating that:

> Whether your collection serves as a public display or as a private preserve, it's a form of expression where you materialize that abstract thing called the self, where you can thus see and handle yourself, even talk to yourself, taking comfort in the way objects stabilise you as a subject'.[176]

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[172] Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*. P. 78.
[173] Campi Flegrei, taken together with Vesuvius, is the area of the caldera on which Naples is built. It is the basis for Hamilton's three volumes entitled *Campi Phlegraei* (1776), of which he was author.
[174] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 147.
[175] Horace Walpole, *Letters of Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford, to Sir Horace Mann, His Britannic Majesty's Resident at the Court of Florence, 1760–1785* (London, 1793), Vol. I, p. 518. The reference 'to the public' referred to Emma Hamilton's 'Attitudes'.
[176] Bill Brown, 'The Collecting Mania', *University of Chicago Magazine*, 94, 1, October 2001.

In Brown's definition, Hamilton remained within the aegis of a collector, rather than a hoarder. Yet he came perilously near to financial collapse because of it on several occasions. By 1750 he had made a small fine art collection of his own but was later forced to sell it to cover debt. He pined for it long afterwards when, aged 50, he offered this rather sad comment to his nephew, Charles Greville: 'I was obliged to sell my collection of pictures once, on which I doted, rather than bear to be dunned.'[177] Hamilton admitted that there was an element of compulsion to his many collections, confessing to his nephew that 'it is impossible for me to be without an object, whilst I can command a farthing'.[178] The prime example of his constant indebtedness was the sale of his first vase collection to the British Museum in 1772. Yet, in one sense collecting and trading suited him, for his collections, together with the Hamilton name, were not to be kept private. Rather, they were to be spread far and wide. Thus, his first vase collection formed the Hamilton Gallery of the British Museum.

Most of Hamilton's writing was from Naples, which involved his mediating a Neapolitan environment to a British audience, only a small number of whom would have experienced Italy. This in itself presented an obstacle to communication. As Chloe Chard comments:

> It should be evident that [travel writings] throughout their history are closely concerned with the traveller/narrator's own rhetorical strategy and with the rhetoric of other travellers. The task of finding the forms of language to translate the topography into discourse is a recurrent subject of discussion.[179]

[177] Morrison, Letter 95. Hamilton to Charles Greville, 12 09 1780.
[178] Morrison, letter 182. Hamilton to Charles Greville, 18 06 1790.
[179] Chloe Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt on the Grand Tour: Travel Writing and Imaginative Geography 1600–1830* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1999), p.9.

Hamilton was well aware of this. Thus, in *Campi Phlegraei* he stressed the problems involved in conveying a sense of place: 'Being sensible of the great difficulty of conveying a true sense of this curious country, I employed Mr Peter Fabris. . . to take drawings of every interesting spot, described in my letters.'[180] In Chapter Three of the thesis, it is noted that when Hamilton's letters were read to Fellows of the Royal Society they were accompanied with appropriate minerals and even a machine which, when activated, showed lava flowing down the slopes of Vesuvius, together with appropriate sound effects. Once in Naples, Hamilton's various guests might gain the real experience of an erupting volcano. All would have lasting memories of their encounter with Vesuvius, with Frederick Hervey, later Earl of Bristol, carrying the scars from his encounter:

> Immediately upon sight of the lava, [Hamilton] left Naples with a party of my countrymen, whom I found as impatient as myself to satisfy their curiosity in examining so curious an operation of nature. . . Mr Hervey was very much wounded in the arm having approached too near and two English gentlemen with him were also hurt.[181]

Some concept of the impact made by the Grand Tour is made clear to the modern reader by reading the accounts of travellers in John Ingamells's *Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy*, which has compressed 1,500 narratives of travellers into one work.[182] Rome had been the most southerly point of the Grand Tour, but the draw of Vesuvius, together with the ongoing excavations in the Naples area, caused increasing numbers of northern Europeans to extend the Grand Tour to Naples. Guthrie observed that:

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[180] Hamilton, W., *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. I, p. 5.
[181] Ibid., Vol. 1, pp. 15-16.
[182] Ingamells, J., *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers*.

> The City of Naples is extremely superb and adorned with the profusion of all the arts and riches and its neighbourhood which would have been one of the most delightful places in Europe to live in.[183]

The social class who might contemplate such a journey was for the most part determined by wealth. Money was available from rich families for their late adolescent sons to leave their homes for a continental journey of some three years. Rome was once the terminus, but as the eighteenth century progressed the Tour extended to Naples. Jeremy Black demonstrates in *The British Abroad: The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Centur*y that participants faced a wide variety of dangers.[184] Sarah Goldsmith perceives these as being an important feature of the Grand Tour's culture and rationale. Furthermore, she asserts that it was 'imbued with transformative properties that encouraged and confirmed the development of valued masculine internal and physical virtues. These experiences constituted a central element of masculine formation and culture.'[185]

The scions of noble houses were often accompanied by a scholarly but impoverished 'bear leader'. The parental hope was that some learning of foreign languages, the arts and natural philosophy would be acquired, but the young frequently had other aims. For instance, entry to the notorious Society of Dilettanti required an aspirant to have travelled to Italy, with no reference to scholarship. Sexual excess was commonplace, but sometimes costly to individual well-being. As early as 1621 John Evelyn (1620–1706) recorded that some of his party, when in

[183] W. Guthrie and J. Ferguson, *A New Geographical Grammar of the Several Kingdoms of the World* (F.C & J. Rivington, London, 1812), p. 601.
[184] Jeremy Black demonstrates this in *The British Abroad: The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* (Sutton Publishing, Stroud, 1992.)
[185] Sarah Goldsmith, *Danger, Risk-taking and Masculinity on the British Grand Tour to the European Continent, c. 1730-1780*. PhD Thesis. University of York, 2015.

Naples, 'did purchase their repentance at a deare rate after their return [sic]', so common were prostitutes and syphilis.[186]

Occasionally poor artists might reach Italy, frequently due to the patronage of a wealthy individual aimed at developing latent talent. Some remained, able to sustain themselves. One such, Gavin Hamilton (1723–1798), was assisted by the Duke of Hamilton to study art in Rome. He lived there for four decades, painting and trading antiquities. He was no relation of the Envoy, William Hamilton, who later purchased fragments of a huge Roman vessel from him, to be reassembled as the Warwick Vase.

Notwithstanding, it was through the eyes of the mostly privileged Grand Tourists that a view of Naples was received in London.[187] Perhaps unsurprisingly these grandees did not engage with the local Neapolitan population. Potential danger lay with the most populous group in Naples, the *lazzaroni*. David Constantine observed that 'All Neapolitans loved spectacle and displayed themselves: the nobility in their carriages. . . . the mob, the *lazzaron*i in rags, half naked or completely naked elsewhere.'[188] In times of famine and distress, the wealthier but numerically minority classes feared them and, like Hamilton, would remain behind locked doors while riots progressed. As will be shown in Chapter Six, the Neapolitan Royal Family treated the *lazzaroni* savagely during the French invasions of the 1790s, with Hamilton supporting their reactionary rulers.

Interest was focussed on antiquity, volcanoes and the pleasures of the flesh. John Evelyn did at least comment that 'The women are well featured but excessively libidinous', doubtless ignoring the dire poverty which forced them to

[186] E. Chaney and N. Ritchie, *Oxford, China and Italy: Writings in Honour of Sir Harold Action on his Eightieth Birthday* (Thames & Hudson, London, 1984), p. 137.
[187] Ibid., pp. 133–152.
[188] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 19.

eke out a living by whatever means.[189] Nelson Moe perceives the *lazzaroni* as simply an interesting part of the landscape of the late eighteenth century. They were used when need required them but ignored as individuals. As a class they were to be feared in times of social unrest.[190] There were both positive and negative reports of Naples from Grand Tourists. William Blackett (1759–1816), writing about the Neapolitans in 1783, commented that:

> I never saw a rougher, more unpolished people both in countenance and manners in my life. They have a vulgarity and ignorance about them which is particularly disgusting.[191]

On the other hand, Charles Sloane (1728–1807) wrote in 1752 that:

> This is a wonderful place or at least its environs are so. The town itself is beastly [but] I live in an excellent hotel with a wonderful view of the Bay. Vesuvius is red hot every night. . . . The carnival is now begun and the town full of plays, masquerades, operas, pickpockets etc.[192]

As will be discussed later, Hamilton made use of *lazzaroni* in roles such as tomb robbing and acting as his porter.[193] There was one exception. Bartolomeo Pumo (dates unknown), himself a *lazzarone*, acted as Hamilton's guide to Vesuvius. The Envoy gave him the generous epithet of 'My cicerone of the mountain'.

The most significant figures in shaping Hamilton's view of ancient art in both Naples and its hinterland, Hancarville and J.J. Winckelmann, were resident in Naples at the time of his arrival. There were other scholars, celebrities of the age but who, in the English-speaking world, are largely forgotten. At his death, Simmaco Mazzocchi (1684–1771),was the most famed antiquary in Naples, and was one of the first to ascribe Greek origins to ancient vases in his *Commentariorum in Regii*

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[189] Constantine D., p. 137.
[190] Moe, N., *The View from Vesuvius: Italian Culture and the Southern Question* (University of California Press, 2007).
[191] Black, *The British Abroad*, p. 43.
[192] Ibid., p. 48.
[193] Calaresu, M., 'From the Street to Stereotype: Urban Space, Travel and The Picturesque in Late Eighteenth-Century Naples', *The Society for Italian Studies* 62, 2, Autumn 2007, p. 67.

herculanensis musei aeanes tabulas heracleeses ('Commentaries on the bronze inscriptions of Heraclea in the Herculaneum Museum'), published between 1754 and 1755. A second famed antiquary of his day was artist Carlo Antonini (active 1758–1790), who had a great interest in ancient vases. He published in four volumes the *Manuale di Vari Ornamenti Traiti dalle Fabriche e Framenti Antichi* (Rome, 1781 to 1790) ('Manual of various ornaments taken from factories, and ancient fragments').[194] Hamilton was not short of tutors, who, because of his enthusiasm, readiness to learn and social status, would be keen to meet him.

A prescient observation was made in a letter from the garrulous Horace Walpole to this friend Sir Thomas Mann (1706–1786), Envoy in Florence. Walpole observed that:

> You have a new neighbour coming to you, Mr William Hamilton, one of the King's equerries, who succeeds Sir James Grey at Naples. Hamilton is a friend of mine . . . He is picture mad and will ruin himself in virtu-land. His wife is as musical as he is a connoisseur, but she is dying of an asthma.[195]

Walpole was wrong in one important respect. Hamilton's 'picture madness' was overshadowed by collecting vases and other aspects of antiquity; but Walpole was correct in assuming that Hamilton nearly 'ruined himself' financially. There are many references in Arthur Morrison's *Collection of Autographed Letters* to Hamilton buying and selling paintings, but they are secondary to his newfound love for collecting antiquities, positioned as he now was in the epicentre of the unique discoveries from the Buried Cities. A letter from Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723–1792) demonstrates the change. Hamilton, although he might not like the term, became a trader.

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[194] See Cessarani G., *Italy's Lost Greece*, pp. 48–68.
[195] *Letters of Horace Walpole to Horace Mann 1760-1785*. Editor unstated (London 1843) Volume 1, Letter 58.

> I hope you have been able to pick up some capital pictures as well as Etruscan vases. I remember that I saw in a palace at Naples. . . . small picture of Paulo Veronese. . . . I thought it the most brilliant picture of the Master I had ever seen. . . . Possibly it might be got by exchange. I think it is worth a hundred pounds.[196]

A constant theme in Hamilton's life was his need to be respected both in social circles and the Republic of Letters. With Naples being 2,000 kilometres distant from London, he developed strategies to keep his name alive in Britain. Letters were sent via friends, ships' captains or the formal post, their delivery taking some thirty days.[197] The range of acquaintances and friends cited in Morrison's *Autographed Letters* confirms the warm relationships Hamilton maintained with those in Britain.[198] Additionally, there was the correspondence to and from the learned societies in London, which often included gifts. Every ten days the Envoy sent diplomatic dispatches.[199] Likewise, he would receive copies of London newspapers and letters from various acquaintances. His library, too, was extensive. He knew that many English and European notables would visit Naples and that his role as Envoy Extraordinary would give him a powerful formal status in relation to them. Furthermore, the civilised entertainment he offered to those visiting him would be mentioned back in Britain, as eyewitnesses confirmed:

> Mr Hamilton, the Envoy receives company every evening. It is the custom to meet at his house. . . some form themselves into small parties of conversation and, as members of this society are often ambassadors, nuncios, Monsignoris, Envoys, Residents or the fine quality of Naples, you will conceive it to be instructive as well as honourable.[200]

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[196] Morrison, Letter 17, Joshua Reynolds to William Hamilton, 28 03 1769.
[197] A. Würgler, 'National and Transnational News Distribution 1400–1800', *European History Online (EGO),* November 2012. http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/european-media/national-and-transnational-news-distribution. (Accessed 15 02 17).
[198] See Appendix 1.
[199] This statement is based on the frequency of diplomatic communication housed in the National Archive.
[200] Samuel Sharp, *Letters from Italy describing the Customs and Manners of the Country in 1765 & 1766* (London, 1766), letter xviii, p.76.

It is doubtful that Hamilton was fully aware of the nature of the Kingdom he now entered. Indeed, the British Government itself was uncertain, tasking Hamilton with the role of determining how best to find an appropriate knowledge base.[201] It suited the newcomer well. Hamilton could fulfil his diplomatic role and concurrently explore seismic phenomena and antiquity throughout the Kingdom. Consciously or not, via this process, he established the activities which were to engage him for the next thirty-six years, alongside his diplomatic role.

There was considerable rivalry between the various ambassadors at the Neapolitan Court, the overall aim being to get as close to the Royal Family as possible, with the aim of discovering the nuances of the Kingdom's policies. At one point, the collecting of ancient vases became a cause for rivalry between Hamilton and the French Envoy to Naples, Dominique Denon (1747–1825).[202] Hamilton's correspondence with the Foreign Department of the British Government demonstrated his early manoeuvring to establish himself both as *persona grata* with the Neapolitan government and an effective ambassador for Britain. The State Papers held in the National Archive at Kew demonstrate Hamilton's tactful negotiations with the Neapolitan Government concerning various sensitive issues and his foremost task, to encourage trade. Thus, he negotiated with Prime Minister Bernardo Tanucci for the release of an English merchant from jail as early as 1765, while the Envoy was constantly diligent in seeking new trading opportunities. [203]

To assist the Envoy there were two Consuls resident in the Kingdom, although one of them, Consul Jamineau (1710–1789), caused Hamilton more problems than

[201] National Archives, State Papers 93/21/20.
[202] See Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes*, p. 127. Denon's name is remembered in the wing of the Louvre dedicated to him.
[203] State Papers 93/20 & 93/21 and 93/20/22.

help, and was eventually formally rebuked from London.[204] Although many scholars have implied that Hamilton's life was a leisured one, the State Papers from the time of his appointment to his abrupt dismissal in 1799 show him to have been an active ambassador.

Catherine and William Hamilton reached Naples after an arduous journey in November 1764 and, as per diplomatic protocol, soon became acquainted with Prime Minister Tanucci and the thirteen-year-old King Ferdinand (1751–1825). The new Envoy was required to live in style, outward display being a necessary indicator of the importance of the country he served. Hamilton established his main residence at the Palazzo Sessa, renting the southern and western sides. It was not only the centre of ambassadorial entertaining, but also the home of Hamilton's collections, which never failed to impress visitors. Clearly, he enjoyed living there. On a wall was the motto *Ubi bene ibi patria* ('Where I am at ease, there is my homeland'). The Palazzo was admired by all who saw and were entertained in it.[205] He acquired a further two houses. The Villa Angelica was an observatory at the foot of Vesuvius, closely associated with his studies in volcanology.[206] It was also close to the Royal Palace, where Hamilton would frequently hunt with King Ferdinand.[207]

[204] State Papers 93/25. Folio 324 and343. There is reference to a William Hamilton seeking to be Consul in Naples in 1753. The National Archive links this person with the Envoy Extraordinary, but there can be no connection. The former describes himself as 'having been a merchant here for many years', during which time the former was in the army in Britain and the Low Countries.

[205] See the painting by Giovanni Battista Lusieri, *The Bay of Naples from Palazzo Sessa, 1790.* http://some-landscapes.blogspot.co.uk/2012/09/Lusieri-Panoramic-Landscape.html (Accessed 06 03 2016).

[206] Its name is misleading, as decades later Emma Hamilton was able to entertain fifty guests there.

[207] University of Manchester Archive, HAM1/4/5/12. (January 1779).

Finally, he rented a small casino at Posillipo, at the water's edge, a welcomed relief during the heat of the Italian summer.[208]

As newcomers, William and Catherine Hamilton were subjects of novelty to residents and visitors. Doubtless there was much mutual entertaining. While visiting others, Hamilton would notice the many ancient painted vases in noble drawing-rooms, such as that of Lord Fortrose (*Figure 1*). This painting is useful in understanding that both libraries and ancient vases were forms of material culture that symbolised a characteristic of the elite as being themselves men of letters. Now established in Naples and with his predisposition to collecting, it was inevitable that Hamilton should wish to retune to it. Vases became his first love, but as the inventory of the sale of his first collection shows, there were various artefacts from Etruscan, Greek and Roman times, as well as pictures dating from the Renaissance.[209]

Some insight into the lifestyle of aristocratic Britons in Naples can be gauged by a close study of three images. The cultured nature of aristocratic Britons in Naples is shown in *Figure 1, Lord Fortrose Entertains*. The painter was Peter Fabris (1740–1792), who drew this scene at a soiree given by Fortrose in 1770.[210] The image is representative of Hamilton's life in Naples. Lord Fortrose stands with his back to us, at the centre of the scene. His friend, William Hamilton, on his left, is playing the violin with Gaetano Pugnani (1731–1798). To the right, in the left-hand corner, the artist has painted himself at work. The two keyboard players are Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791), then aged fourteen, and his father, Leopold (1719–

[208] Carlo Knight, 'Sir William Hamilton's Neapolitan Houses', *The Friends of Herculaneum Society* < http://www.herculaneum.ox.ac.uk/?q=knight> (Accessed 28 08 2019.)
[209] The inventory, handwritten by Hancarville, is held in the British Museum.
[210] Peter Fabris will be assessed at length within the chapter on Hamilton's work on natural philosophy.

1787), who visited Naples in the summer of 1770. The room in which the concert was performed was a paradigm of the Neoclassical, with typical mouldings and many pictures offering classical themes. The cabinet of curiosities highlights amphorae and krateri, with a range of smaller decorated ancient vases beneath. The lower shelves contain metal objects of uncertain provenance which might well be from antiquity. Note also the old master paintings in grisaille. Lord Fortrose, like Hamilton, required a prominent library. The aristocracy's outdoor pursuits are represented by swords, pistols and dogs. *Figure 2* is of Catherine and William Hamilton in a genteel scene in the Palazzo Sessa, again painted in 1770. The artist, David Allen (1744–1796), was a Scot who travelled to Italy under the patronage of Lord Cathcart (1721–1776), Hamilton's brother in law. The image is a scene of high culture, but it also demonstrates the success of Hamilton's first marriage. Hamilton's desk focusses on the bundle of diplomatic documents in their red tape. Servants are in elaborate livery. Through the window the pictorial trope of Vesuvius is viewed gently smoking. Catherine was a gifted harpsicord player and this image features a content William Hamilton gazing fondly at his wife. The Envoy had cause to be grateful to her, for she ensured that the Palazzo Sessa was well ordered according to her strict evangelical beliefs. *Figure 3* continues the aristocratic setting Hamilton enjoyed, showing him in full diplomatic regalia at his apogee. The diplomatic papers and the image of Vesuvius are prominent. It displayed that Hamilton had achieved one objective in his requirement for personal recognition. There is a commonality in the three images. They display the conspicuous wealth and status of their owners, both in their possessions and their grand homes aligning them with Neapolitans grandees. With regard to Hamilton, it is notable that the calm gentility shown in this series of images was to be shattered by his second wife, Emma, in the last decades of the century.

The sources available to Hamilton before his appointment could not prepare Catherine and William for the reality of life in Naples. The Kingdom of Naples and Sicily had existed for only thirty years.[211] Between 1501 and 1734 it had been ruled by viceroys from Spain or Austria, rendering it little more than a province contested by two of Europe's greatest powers. Its eventual independence was due more to internecine strife between royal factions than any national uprising. In 1733, following the Treaty of Utrecht, the death of King Augustus II (1697–1733) plunged Europe into the War of Polish Succession. Charles, Duke of Parma, was a younger son of King Philip V of Spain. His father, Philip V, ceded his right of succession to him and Charles was crowned as Charles VII of Naples and Charles V of Sicily in June 1735. The local population was enthusiastic at the thought of having their own king and willingly accepted the new order. In 1759 Charles returned to Spain, abdicating the throne of the new kingdom in favour of his third surviving son, Ferdinand (1751–1825), who became King Ferdinand IV.[212] It was this boy king, aged eight, who, nominally at least, headed the Kingdom during Hamilton's entire residence in Naples.

Hamilton had been raised within a constitutional monarchy and he had once been a Member of Parliament. Now he was to function within the confines of an absolute monarchy. The monuments to the new Kingdom were three grand palaces. Portici, the summer residence, was begun in 1738, together with the Palace of Capodimonte, which was in part intended to house the art collection inherited from Charles's grandmother, Elizabeth Farnese (1692–1766). The Caserta

[211] For more detail see Calaresu, 'The Enlightenment in Naples', Chapter 18.
[212] Not until 1816 was it to be the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. It was commonly referred to as such. Hamilton consistently refers to 'His Sicilian Majesty'.

Palace, begun in 1758, aspired to rival Versailles. It was conceived as the principal administrative centre, an impregnable fortress against foreign or civil attacks, and as a centre for high culture holding the most important discoveries from Herculaneum and Pompeii. In one sense, these grandiose buildings epitomised the divide between rulers and the ruled. In times of stress or famine, the *lazzaroni* proved to be a force sufficient to cause the rulers unease. Yet these building works, together with the large-scale excavations in the area, were welcomed by the masses for the employment they created. These issues apart, there were no specific changes from previous regimes, except that revenues from the Kingdom fell under the jurisdiction of the King of Naples, rather than being appropriated by distant Hapsburgs or Bourbon rulers.

When the monarchy was established it was met with celebration and enthusiasm, but the question arises why this was so. The abject poverty with which the majority of the citizens struggled contrasted with the wealth of the nobility and clergy, together with a financially secure professional class. It seemed an unlikely basis for social cohesion. King Charles's successor, the underage Ferdinand, proved to be an eccentric monarch. Prime Minister, Bernardo Tanucci, who headed the Council of Regency, discouraged Ferdinand from becoming educated, a cynical move to deny him accretion of power. The King's great love was hunting, but he would mix with the *lazzaroni* when it suited him. It is recorded that the young King would even go fishing with the poor and then sell his catch alongside them. It was a gesture only, for during the famine of 1763, still a boy of thirteen, he offered no resistance to Tanucci's brutal repression of the starving masses.[213] Hamilton was

[213] Judith Harris, *Pompeii Awakened: A Stony of Rediscovery* (I. B. Tauris, London, 2007), pp. 74–75.

later to spend much time hunting with the King, but frequently commented on his dislike of Ferdinand's mass slaughter of animals.[214]

Numerically, the overwhelming majority of Neapolitans were the poor and illiterate, while 28 of every thousand in the population were clergy, according to General Pietro Colletta (1775–1831), himself a Neapolitan army officer.[215] In percentage terms, the aristocracy were even fewer in number. A small proportion of them were fabulously wealthy, but many were in Hamilton's previous predicament of being born into aristocratic circles but with few assets. The entire Neapolitan population realised the cultural and economic significance of the ongoing archaeological excavations which attracted many foreigners to Naples. A great sense of pride was apparent when in 1777 the excavated Herculaneum statuary was paraded through the City in the style of a Roman Triumph en route to its new home in the Palazzo Degli Studi, now the National Archaeological Museum of Naples.

Some analysis is required of contemporary South Italian historiography in order to establish why the population perceived themselves as a nation. Within the collective consciousness there was a belief that the new Kingdom had a noble history. The term 'Magna Graecia' was widely known, and scholars found it used in a variety of classical sources. Pliny the Elder commented that 'The very Greeks themselves, a race fond in the extreme of expatiating on their own praises, have amply given judgment in its favour, when they named but a small part of it Magna Graecia.'[216] Cicero observed that 'The philosophers who once visited this country,

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[214] Morrison, Letter 101, Sir William Hamilton to Charles Greville, Caserta, 13. 3. 1781). See also Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 48.
[215] Pietro Colletta, *History of the Kingdom of Naples, 1734-1825*, S. Horner, trans. (Edinburgh, 1858).
[216] Giovanna Ceserani, *Italy's Lost Greece: Magna Graecia and the Making of Modern Italy*, p. 56.

and who by their maxims and doctrines educated Magna Graecia, was at that time in a flourishing condition, though it has now been ruined.'[217] Hamilton was later to give credence to the importance of the Greeks, as he battled for recognition that many ancient vases were associated with Greek tradition and culture.[218] As the excavation of the Buried Cities and Etruscan tombs gathered pace, so pristine examples of both Greek and Roman culture added to the unique heritage of the new Kingdom.

The knowledge that parts of the Kingdom had been vital to the Greeks led historians from the Renaissance onward to probe the issue of its antiquity. Leandro Alberti (1479–1552) in his *Descrittione di tutta Italia* was the first early modern scholar to use the term 'Magna Graecia'. [219] He had travelled to the region, which North Italians perceived as dangerous, unruly and impoverished. Because he gained this local knowledge, his writings about the area had an added credibility. He disputed that the ancient Greeks had used the term for the entire region, asserting that it referred to a narrow area around Taranto, favoured by Greek colonists. By so doing he was one of those who established the trope offered to provide the current inhabitants with an underlying pride in their region. Those from Northern Europe tended towards a spatial interpretation. For example, Philip Clüver (1580-1622) focused on the geography of Magna Graecia as simply a regional name, while Italian commentators used the term with a sense of admiration for an autochthonous culture.[220] There was particular pride in the connection with Pythagoras. Some went as far as to claim that he was born on the Italian Island of

[217] Charles Eliot (Ed.), *Letters of Marcus Tullius Cicero with His Treatises on Friendship and Old Age; Letters of Pliny the Younger*. (The Five Foot Shelf of Classics), Vol. IX: Paperback (Cosimo Classics, 2010), p. 12. (Cicero, *De Amicitia, 13*).
[218] Ceserani, *Italy's Lost Greece*, pp. 256–260.
[219] L. Alberti, *Descrttione di tutta Italia* (Bologna, 1600).
[220] P. Clüver, *Italia Antiqua.* (Lugduni Batavorum, 1624).

Samo, rather than the Greek island, Samos.[221] Closer to Hamilton's time in Naples was Alessio Mazzochi (1684–1771). His previously mentioned *Commentaries on the bronze inscriptions of Heraclea in the Herculaneum Museum* promoted the idea of a Roman-centred glorious past for the new Kingdom. His assiduous research of ancient sources,was coupled with an Enlightenment approach to reason. It is his name, more than any other, which is associated with modern scholarship of the history of South Italy. Mazzocchi's status was preeminent and celebrated as the 'miracle of all literary Europe'. The conclusion he reached on the meaning of Magna Graecia was dogmatic: 'Never would the Greeks have called a small part of Italy great if they did not understand that whatever related to Italy, however small, it should be called great.'[222] Continuity from Greek colonization can, with far greater certainty, be traced linguistically. Two small Italiot-speaking communities survive to this day in Calabria and the peninsula of Salento in Apulia. Now termed 'Greco' or Grecanic, the most feasible hypotheses on the linguistic origins of Italiot lie with the original Greek colonies. This Southern Italian dialect may well be the sole remaining Greek element from Magna Graecia. Even so, lack of transport and the impossibility of the poor travelling any distance makes it difficult to believe that the *lazzaroni* of Naples would be aware of the ancient language still spoken in distant parts of the Kingdom.

The Buried Cities allowed King Charles to give this new state its own aetiological history, which he achieved through emphasising the Greek and Roman patrimony of the area. A more general issue, and one still facing modern Italy, was that of the *questione meridionale* which emerged during the period in which Hamilton was

[221] Cesarani, *Italy's Lost Greece*, p.8.
[222] Alesso Mazzocchi, *In mutilum Campani ampitheatri titulum aliasque nonnullas, Campanas inscriptiones commentaries* (Naples, 1727), p. 19.

Envoy. The new Kingdom perceived its history as a complex blend of native Greek and Roman origins. Further North in Tuscany their eponymous founders were perceived as the Etruscans. Ambiguity as to their origins can be traced in major works of this period. An example was the Comte de Caylus, who titled his publication of 1752 *Recueil d'antiquités égyptiennes, étruscanes, grecques et romaines*, although accurate as to its contents, the text avoided precise definitions.[223] It would be a further half century before objective conclusions were drawn, and Hamilton was to play a major role in the process. In terms of antiquity, Sicily was perceived differently. Its history was viewed as more cosmopolitan, with contemporary Italian authors tending to ignore it when delving into classical origins. Conversely, Grand Tourists, alongside Hamilton, linked Sicily directly to the mainland. When considering its geology and classical remains he was correct to do so.[224]

'Cutting edge' scholars of the time attempted to find continuity between the customs of the ancients and those of contemporaries. One theme was that of the tarantella, a lively dance associated with courtship rituals. In the Italian province of Taranto in Apulia, the dance was named after the bite of the wolf spider, which was popularly believed to be highly poisonous and to lead to a hysterical condition, 'tarantism'. Historically, the dance can be traced back no further than the eleventh century CE. R. Lowe-Thompson proposed that the dance was a survival from a suppressed Dionysiac cult.[225] That the Senate did indeed ban the Bacchanalia in 186

[223] A. C. Caylus, *Recueil d'antiquités égyptiennes, étrusques, grecques, romaines et gauloises*, 6 vols. (Paris, 1752-1755).
[224] See Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei,* Letter IV. P. 36 ff.
[225] R. Lowe-Thompson, *The History of the Devil*. (Home Farm Books, London, 1929), p. 164.

BCE was reported by Livy.[226] While there is no reason to doubt that erotic dancing was practiced in antiquity, no objective evidence can link the tarantella dance directly with Magna Graecia. Notwithstanding, the tarantella was a favourite dance of the *lazzaroni*. William and Emma Hamilton enjoyed it too. William continued to do so in his old age.[227] As will be seen, Hamilton later provided his own evidence for ancient erotic practices, when he recorded a phallic cult at remote Isernia.

In the next chapter this thesis proceeds to analyse Hamilton's contribution to various areas of knowledge, which demands using the terminology of modern divisions within scholarship to some extent. The Envoy writes in a manner that disregards subject barriers as they are perceived in the twenty-first century. Ian Jenkins has described the Envoy's attitude to learning:

> In the person of Hamilton, we find the epitome of the idea of an eighteenth-century amateur, interested in all around him. To call Hamilton an archaeologist or natural philosopher is to diminish his role as someone who would not have recognised the modern division of the arts and the sciences as discrete fields of intellectual enquiry. Hamilton loved nature and the arts as one and shared the universal interest of the antiquaries of the past.[228]

This chapter has pointed to a man from whom initially not a great deal was expected, apart from running a competent embassy in Naples. Had he impressed the British authorities, he might have been promoted, such as when he later sought, but failed, to obtain the prestigious roles of ambassador to Madrid and then St Petersburg.[229] For posterity, it proved to be a happy decision to leave him in

[226] Sarolta Takács, 'Politics and Religion in the Bacchanalian Affair of 186 B.C.E'. *'Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, Vol. 100 (2000), pp. 301-310. See also, John Compton, *The Life of the Spider* (Mentor Books, London, 1954), p. 56.
[227] Henry Wheatley, *Wraxall's Historical and Posthumous Memoirs* (London 1884). Reproduced in the *Quarterly Review,* 13, p. 196.
[228] Jenkins, I & Sloan, K.*,* (London, 1996), p 41.
[229] National Archive SP. 93/30.

Naples, as it will be shown that he accomplished much in the fields of antiquity and natural philosophy.

Chapter Two

Hamilton's Engagement with Philosophy and Natural Philosophy

Hamilton and the Philosophers

Hamilton was well aware of the scientific advances from the Renaissance onward. Copernicus (1473–1543) removed earth from its proud place at the centre of the universe. Galileo (1564–1642) made possible more detailed astronomic observations, whilst Kepler's (1571–1630) development of the telescope showed orbiting objects around other planets. The heavens were thus observed in a manner previously unimagined. It remained for Isaac Newton (1643–1727) to demonstrate that the universe might be perceived as functioning via unchanging scientific laws. His *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica* (1686) became the foundation of modern mechanics, enhanced by his advances in the theory of optics and his association with Gottfried Leibniz (1646–1716) in developing the calculus. Newton's work was disseminated throughout Europe. Roy Porter described him as '(t)he god who put English science on the map; an intellectual colossus flanked with Bacon and Locke'.[230]

Hamilton accepted these discoveries and applied them in his own research. His conclusions about the history of the earth and the nature of volcanoes are self-evidently not in the same league as the luminaries mentioned, but they nevertheless have their own significance. He had cause to be grateful to Francis Bacon (1561–1626), viewed by many as the inspiration for the establishment of the Royal Society of London, which was granted its Charter in 1662. Bacon was sometimes termed 'the father of empiricism', popularising the inductive method for scientific inquiry. This

[230] Porter, *Enlightenment*, p. 135.

involved reasoning that derives general principles from specific observations. Conclusions from such research were for 'the use and benefit of men and the relief of the human condition', a practical interpretation of the famous aphorism *scientia potentia est*, found in the 1668 version of Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*.

Hamilton made a forthright comment supporting Bacon's position, whilst directly attacking Cartesianism as an inappropriate method for use within natural historical research. On arrival in Naples, he knew of the City's volcanic hinterland but had no personal knowledge of seismic forces. Twelve years later, in 1776, he wrote with confidence and authority:

> It is to be lamented, that those who have wrote most, on the subject of Natural History, have seldom been themselves the observers, and have too readily taken for granted systems, which other ingenious and learned men, having perhaps performed in their closets, with as little foundation of self-experience: the more such systems may have been treated with ingenuity, the more they have served to mislead, and heap error upon error. Accurate and faithful observations on the operations of nature, related with simplicity and truth, are not to be met with often.[231]

Hamilton's contributions, based on field observations, led him to draw his own conclusions from them, a methodology which, in general, followed the philosophy of Francis Bacon. It is helpful to consider the main streams of philosophical thinking of which Hamilton was aware. The deductive methods of René Descartes (1596–1650) was essential to the Enlightenment, establishing the mathematically based sciences upon a secure metaphysical footing. Cartesian thought began from the premise that knowledge can be derived through reason using innate ideas. For its adherents, in essence, all knowledge was based on sense experience and, because sense experience is fallible, is therefore only probable. Cartesians were forced to satisfy themselves with uncertainty in science because they believed that God was omnipotent, and the Almighty alone enjoyed total free will. God could, if he so

[231] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. I, p. 5.

wished, stand logic on its head. The human intellect by contrast, was finite. Humans could be certain only of what God revealed and of the fact that they and God exist, leading to the maxim *Je pense, donc je suis.*[232] For Hamilton, Cartesian reason was inappropriate to natural philosophy. It was necessary to experiment, observe and only then to hypothesise, based on previous observation and experiment. The last stage would be to offer conclusions, which might themselves be modified.

The nature of Hamilton's work was primarily empirical, based on detailed observation both by him and the knowledge workers he employed. Within geological research he is dismissive of deductive reasoning applied to natural phenomena. Inductive reasoning begins with specific observations and progresses analytically to broader generalizations and theories based on the observed cases. Instead Hamilton looked for global instances of the phenomena he observed and only from such evidence did he move to universalist observations. Hamilton's approach most closely followed that of David Hume (1711–1776), whose arguments were in keeping with the empiricist view that all knowledge derived from sense experience. Within the philosophy of religion, Hume argued that belief in miracles was unreasonable if Newtonian science was accepted. His acute insight led him to propose that religious belief was grounded in the human psyche, rather than in rational argument or divine revelation. By this means, philosophy and theology need not be intertwined. He questioned whether the answer to question 'A' would always be 'B', postulating that nothing was ever certain and that the universe must be taken on trust. Although not at odds with the empiricists' argument that experimental results were subject to modification, Hume's assertion left all scientific questions in an open state.

[232] The phrase is found in R. Descartes, *Discours de la méthode* (1633). For a more detailed discussion see John Cottingham's article on 'Descartes' in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005).

Throughout his Neapolitan sojourn, Hamilton never reached a state of absolute certainty on natural philosophy, always hoping that others would advance his findings while he deferred to those whose knowledge he reckoned to be greater than his own. Writing about the destruction wrought in times past by volcanoes he stated:

> I speak with greater confidence, since I had the pleasure of accompanying Monsieur de Saussure, Professor of natural history at Geneva, and showing him every one of my observations, on the spots themselves, when the learned philosopher, whose modesty, talents and great experience are so well known, agreed perfectly. [233]

From this it is clear that Hamilton felt more at ease with his assertions when supported by an internationally famed expert. As Anne Goldar comments, 'The unwritten rules demanded that those high in the scholarly hierarchy deserved especially respectful treatment'. These rules were certainly observed by Hamilton in this instance.[234]

The Religious background

There were two conflicting concepts of earth history present in Hamilton's lifetime: those of the Neptunists and the Plutonists. The great proponent of Neptunism was Abraham Werner (1749–1817), who suggested in the late eighteenth century, that the earth was once completely covered by an ocean from which, as it receded, the earth's land masses emerged in a precise order.[235] Different rock types were dependent on the length of time for which they had been submerged. The earliest period was characterised by very deep, calm water conditions, in which Werner believed the hard crystalline rocks such as granite were formed. His ideas

[233] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. I, p. 4.
[234] Goldar, *Impolite Learning*, p. 161.
[235] A. Ospavat, *Abraham Gottlob Werner and his Influence on Mineralogy and Geology* (University of Oklahoma, 1960). Ph.D. Dissertation.

were consistent with those who believed that the Biblical flood had covered the entire planet. Plutonism was a further theory of Earth History, which ran counter to that of the Neptunists. They held that the igneous rocks originated from deep seated magmatic and metamorphic activity, which allowed new materials to form on the surface of the earth. These were then worn down by weathering and sea erosion to layers of strata under the sea, and as a result they frequently contained fossils formed from marine creatures. In the eighteenth century, Calvinists regarded subterranean fires as evidence of earth's internal combustion, which would precede the Second Coming according to the Revelation of St John the Divine.

Alongside his field work, Hamilton read widely both contemporary and ancient works on natural philosophy in relation to Campi Flegrei. His footnotes record many examples. For instance, he cited Lord Winchelsea, who had written about the great eruption of Etna in 1669 and its land-building properties.[236] Hamilton's library included Athanasius Kircher's (1602–1680) famed *Mundus Subterraneous*, a work that advanced from a medieval view of Earth History.[237] For those understanding Latin, it was his most popular book: both readable and extravagantly illustrated. Joscelyn Godwin views Kircher's work as, 'A textbook in general science. . . [which] does not broach new frontiers of knowledge but proffers its information in a readable and lavishly illustrated form, free from mathematical and philosophical complexities.'[238] D. R. Oldroyd considered the work as being 'What the seventeenth-century man in the street may have thought of the Earth's interior'. According to Oldroyd, 'It gave expression to the beliefs of his day, and in his illustrations he reveals what many sixteenth and seventeenth-century writers thought was going on in the

[236] Hamilton, *Campi Phegraei,* Vol. I, p. 39, fn. b.
[237] A Kircher, *Mundus Subterraneous* (Amsterdam, 1665).
[238] J. Godwin, *Athanasius Kircher: A Renaissance Man and the Quest for Lost Knowledge* (London, 1978), p. 96.

Earth's interior'.[239] Kercher's work would certainly have been significant in the Envoy's reading.

Few seventeenth-century savants had seen any good reason to doubt that the traditional timescale of world history was of the right order of magnitude.[240] The scholarly, biblically based work of chronologists deepened such beliefs. Yet Hamilton's writing contains no criticism of their chronologies. The reality was that his empirical methodology:

> Enabled him to pragmatically side-step the semi-scientific fantasy and obligatory classical hyperbole. . . Even as his work helped undermine established religious beliefs, Hamilton refrained from referring to Genesis or the Bible as a whole. He simply noted that based on his years of experience observing Vesuvius and the time it took for volcanic processes to work down into soil, the Earth would have to be many thousands of years earlier than the Bible held it to be.[241]

Hamilton's own religious beliefs are ill defined, although the evidence points to him following the Enlightenment perspective that the universe was created by an omnipotent God. In his letter to the Royal Society of 1795, he refers to volcanoes and their role in land building as being 'Carried on surely for the wisest purposes by the beneficent Author of nature'.[242] Hamilton's conclusion that volcanic landscape evolved over an immensity of time went beyond the belief that most Christians of his generation respected, namely Archbishop Ussher's assertion that, taking evidence from biblical texts, the date of Creation could be computed as 6 PM on 22 October 4004 BCE.[243] In context, Ussher's work was not risible. It was a serious attempt,

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[239] D. R. Oldroyd, *Thinking About the Earth: A History of Ideas in Geology* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996), p. 410.
[240] Martin Rudwick, *Bursting the Limits of Time: The Reconstruction of GeoHistory in an Age of Revolution* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2005), pp. 79–80.
[241] Noam Andrews, 'Volcanic Rhythms: Sir William Hamilton's Love Affair with Vesuvius', *Architectural Association School of Architecture*, 60, 2010, p. 12.
[242] Royal Society, *Philosophical Transactions* (1795), Vol. 85, p.111.
[243] The Sunday School movement allowed thousands of working-class children to read the Bible. Nigel Ashton, 'Horne and Heterodoxy: The Defence of Anglican Beliefs in the Late Enlightenment', *The English Historical Review*, CVIII, CCCCXXIX, October 1993, pp 895–919;

based on Biblical scholarship, to create an Earth History.[244] Empirical thought had reached only a small section of society. Thus, Hamilton was out of kilter with mainstream beliefs of his age by supporting new concepts in the study of earth sciences and their dramatic new findings. For him, the earth became understood as a living organism, as against the Calvinistic view that volcanoes demonstrated the planet burning up pending the Last Judgement, and that great mountain ranges were evidence of the chaos resulting from the Fall.[245]

The physical hell, such as that portrayed by Hieronymus Bosch (1450–1516), was discarded by Enlightenment thinkers in favour of a universe that linked the human and the divine.[246] Nature was ordered by universal physical laws and was a superb example of divine artistry. Yet, in Hamilton's thinking some biblical tenets remained, in that the planet had been bequeathed by a benevolent Creator for mankind to subdue and use. An early geologist, John Woodward (1665–1728), offered the view that '(t)he grand design of nature was the conservation of the globe in a just equilibrium'.[247] Thus as nascent earth sciences advanced and the planet was more frequently perceived as a self-repairing organism, so previous ideas of God as immanent moved to a more transcendent divine presence. In turn, the spectacular natural phenomena once interpreted with medieval religious awe and fear were replaced with concepts of the sublime, more psychological than theological. There is

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Doreen Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches, 1500-2000* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003) pp. 174–175.

[244] Smith, Michael, *Conflict Myths and the Date of Creation.* https://www.bethinking.org/is-there-a-creator/conflict-myths-bishop-ussher-and-the-date-of-creation (Accessed 25 06 2019). Dr Michael Smith is an oceanographic research with the University of Melbourne.

[245] Porter, *Enlightenment*, pp. 295–300.

[246] Ibid., Chapter 5, 'Rationalising Religion'.

[247] J. Woodward, *An Essay Toward a Natural History of the Earth* (London, 1695), pp. 30–32. The Biblical myth of the Fall can be found in Genesis, Chapter 3.23.

no suggestion that all Enlightenment followers were either atheists or humanists.[248] Yet in outward form, differences between the clergy, who imbibed Enlightenment theology, and the laity were less obvious in Britain than on the Continent. Roy Porter cites Professor Saussure, for whom Hamilton had a high regard. On a visit to London Saussure observed that '(a) foreigner is surprised to find clergy in public places where they smoke and drink just like laymen but as they scandalise nobody, you quickly get accustomed to the sight'.[249] This observation, although representing a tranche of liberal clergy, ignored the large and rising numbers of dissenting nonconformist Christians and Evangelicals whose ministers would not be found in London coffee houses.[250]

When necessary, Hamilton accepted the established Church of England because, as a diplomat, he could do nothing else. For example, his wedding to Emma Hart at Marylebone Parish Church in 1791 required the permission of George III.[251] There is little to indicate that the Envoy had any particular interest in church attendance. Catherine Hamilton, his first wife and a devout Evangelical, made the point firmly as she approached death in 1782:

> The dissipated life you lead my dear Hamilton, prevents you attending to those great truths in comparison of which all is folly. For God's sake do not reject those truths nor despise the plain simplicity of a religion on which our salvation depends. [252]

Such a statement from his devout Protestant wife further demonstrates that Hamilton had little interest in organised Christian worship, and that his lifestyle was

[248] The religion of the Enlightenment is well summed up in Joseph Addison's (1672–1719) hymn *The Spacious Firmament on High*, published in *The Spectator,* Issue 420, 1712.
[249] Porter, *Enlightenment*, p. 98.
[250] Rosman, *Evolution of the English Churches*, Chapter 6.
[251] See Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 181 for detail of tension between Hamilton and the Archbishop of Canterbury concerning Hamilton's marriage to Emma Hart.
[252] Morrison, Letter 117, Hamilton to Charles Greville, Naples, 07. 04 1782.

other than that required of a devout Evangelical Christian. As a result, his various interests, particularly in the field of natural philosophy, allowed him to move on from traditional Christian interpretation of Earth History, relatively unburdened by dogmatic theology. The Envoy can best be described as a latitudinarian, a term initially pejorative, used for those members of the Church of England who, while outwardly conforming to its practices, felt that doctrinal and liturgical issues, together with ecclesiastical organisation, were of relatively little importance. Quiet dissent from doctrines enshrined in the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion were tolerated.[253] Hamilton would have concurred with Archbishop Tillotson (1630–1694), who accepted Newtonian logic and unequivocally rejected doctrines such as transubstantiation as being beyond reason. In practical terms he stated that 'Two things make any course of life easy, present pleasure and the assurance of a future reward', a sentiment which Hamilton would wholly endorse.[254]

Romanticism, a reaction to the perceived 'coldness' of Neoclassicism, developed rapidly in the second half of the eighteenth century. Although William Hamilton is particularly associated with Neoclassicism, there is evidence that he was also influenced by Romanticism. It had at its core a desire for personal intensity, a reaction against what was considered the cold, emotion-denying world of Enlightenment thought. 'Dark satanic mills' were to be replaced by the 'green and pleasant land'. Whereas empiricism offered a model that allowed modification of belief following advances in the empirical knowledge base, Romanticism found nobility in defending an ideal against all odds. Writers such as the Romantic Poets

[253] 'It hath been the wisdom of the Church of England. . . to keep the mean between two extremes of too much stiffness in refusing and too much easiness in admitting any variation from it'. Preface, *Book of Common Prayer*, 1662.
[254] J. Tillotson, *Works of the Most Reverent Dr John Tillotson, Late Archbishop of Canterbury, Containing Fifty-Five Sermons and Discourses* (London, 1720).

verbalised the angst of an age which, while welcoming scientific advance, were in some regards anxious about it. One example is William Wordsworth's (1770–1850) Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1798). It exemplifies his famous definition of poetry, as 'The spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings' originating from emotions brought into consciousness when in a state of tranquillity. In it, Wordsworth asserted that:

> Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because, in that condition, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity.[255]

The development of natural philosophy was continued, making substantial and exciting developments. Some Romantic thinkers saw beauty in the industrial process. Sir Humphrey Davy (1773–1829), for example, possessed personal charisma and charm used effectively when he gave public lectures at the Royal Institution of Great Britain, making him extremely popular among elite Londoners of the day. Both Enlightenment and Romantic thinkers wished to increase self-understanding of the individual by noting the limits in human knowledge through natural science and human intellect. Yet the Romantic movement tended to react negatively against the Enlightenment's emphasis on rational thought through deductive reasoning, which had rendered an approach to science both insensitive and controlling, rather than accept the natural order which was to peacefully co-exist with nature. Within the Romantic movement, the human spirit could never be reduced to a system. Humanity might discover the mechanics of nature, but it was left to the individual to flourish creatively within them. William Blake (1757–1827) captured the essence of the conflict between the perceived straitjacket of the Enlightenment and the essential nature of human self-expression. His couplet 'A robin redbreast in a cage/puts all heaven in a rage' is eloquent but

[255] William Wordsworth, *Preface to Lyrical Ballads* (1800), The Harvard Classics (Harvard, 1909–14).

presents an extreme position.[256] An emotion frequently associated with Romanticism was that of the sublime, a concept almost associated with terror. Edmund Burke (1729–1797) defined it as: 'Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger... Whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror.[257]

Earlier theocentric ideologies resolved issues through religious dogma, but for a growing number this was no longer the case by the end of the eighteenth century. In a state of the sublime, every emotion is engaged. Hamilton is linked to Romanticism particularly in his relationship with volcanoes, where he experienced the sublime. Reaching the summit of Etna after a night hike, he observed:

> Soon after we had seated ourselves on the highest point of Etna, the sun arose and displayed a scene that indeed passes all description. The horizon lighted up by degrees, we discovered the greatest part of Calabria and the sea on the other side of it, the Lipari Islands, Stromboli with its smoking top . . . seemed to be just under our feet.[258]

Hamilton made frequent use of similes to describe volcanic situations, in words that were linked to Romantic descriptions. In trying to describe the solid material carried within a lava flow, he wrote, 'In the daytime [liquid lava] had the appearance of the river Thames, as I have seen it after a hard frost and great fall of snow . . . carrying down vast masses of snow and ice.'[259] If the view from Etna was sublime, so too was Vesuvius in full eruption.[260] Peter Fabris offered an image in *Campi Phlegraei* that impresses today and was awe-inspiring in the eighteenth century (See *Figure 4*).[261] Here the Neapolitan Royal Family watch a 'lava fall' dropping 45 metres into a

[256] William Blake, *Auguries of Innocence* (London, 1802).
[257] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, Section VII, *On the Sublime* (London, 1759).
[258] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. I, p. 46. Stromboli is 70 miles East of Etna.
[259] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. I, p. 18.
[260] Ibid., Vol. II, plate 38.
[261] Ibid., Vol. II, plate 37

gully. Fabris can be seen sketching the scene (bottom left), while Hamilton observes alongside the Royal Family. Neoclassicism emphasised order and logic, but Romanticism focused on emotional and imaginative responses. *Figure 4* contains elements of both. The Court, with both men and women present, solemnly watch the event, interesting as a natural phenomenon, but also provoking sensations of the sublime.

An empathetic response from the eighteenth-century public was generated when charred, but recognisable, household utensils emerged from the Pompeian excavations. They generated a frisson of Romantic attachments to those who perished. One response was when Josiah Wedgwood, who frequently used images from Hamilton's vase collections, created a 'Romantic style' candlestick in the form of a ruined classical column (*Figure 23.1*).

It was in *Campi Phlegraei* that Hamilton nailed his colours to the mast of Empiricism. It was a work that contained much natural philosophy, whose text made it abundantly clear that its author was familiar with the major schools of thought, underpinned with considerable, self-taught, scholarship. One aspect of *Campi Phlegraei* was to link the history of the earth with Vesuvius's behaviour post 79 CE. Furthermore, the scholarly footnotes continually linked the present with both history and the Theory of the Earth. It was in no sense a polemic, aspiring to undermine religious truisms regarding Earth History; rather, it was the response of one man, who had few religious preconceptions, exploring a famous mountain within a volcanic area.

Hamilton's reasons for writing *Campi Phlegraei*

The section following will demonstrate that *Campi Phlegraei* was both unique in its methodology and was one of the first empirical studies of the Neapolitan Caldera.

It became a sourcebook for succeeding generations of natural philosophers, who in the first decades of the nineteenth century could be termed geologists. It is to explore Hamilton's contribution to geomorphology, seismology and volcanology that the discourse now turns.

It will be argued that it was in this field of natural philosophy that Hamilton was at his most original. He demonstrated an ability to incorporate into his own work the writings of others, both ancient and contemporary. Equally, his networking with contemporary experts renders *Campi Phlegraei* more a compendium of knowledge than just a collection of letters to the Royal Society. Modern commentators were mentioned in the Introduction of the thesis, but this area of Hamilton's work has not been extensively researched.

Hamilton made clear his deep engagement with Campi Flegrei in the opening sentence of his first letter to the Royal Society: 'I have attended particularly to the various changes of Mount Vesuvius from the 17th of November, 1764, the day of my arrival at this Capital.'[262] It was no exaggeration as Vesuvius and the caldera surrounding it became a fascination for him throughout his thirty-five years in Naples, the longest ever geological longitudinal study of Naples and its hinterland. Furthermore, the letters published in *Campi Phlegraei* did much to heighten awareness of volcanic phenomena in general, as will be demonstrated in the next section. Two questions emerge with which there has been little scholarly engagement. The first is what led to his near obsession with the natural philosophy of the area, and the second concerns his motivation for writing in so much detail to the Royal Society and the subsequent publication of his letters to them. Hamilton found pleasure in his new situation immediately. In a letter to Lord Palmerston he wrote:

[262] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 14.

> I begin to enjoy the many curiosities of art and nature with which you know that this country abounds. . . . When I am settled and make new discoveries here I will take the opportunity of troubling you with a letter. . . I admire the bronzes of Herculaneum exceedingly and the tour to Pozzuoli is very classical and entertaining.[263]

Hamilton's diplomatic charge, namely to advise the Foreign Department in London of the economic potential of the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily, has been previously mentioned. It had not been surveyed accurately. The task was made more difficult because of the disrepair or absence of roads outside Naples. *Campi Phlegraei* reveals that Hamilton journeyed to all parts of the Kingdom with seeming enjoyment. His devotion to Vesuvius is well stated by Edward Edwards: [264]

> His first labours were given to the exhaustive research of volcanic phenomena. He amazed the fine gentlemen of Naples by setting to work as though he had to win his bread by the sweat of his brow. . . Within four years he ascended the famous mountain twenty-two times. [265]

Hamilton's enthusiasm was such as drove him to write letters to the Royal Society concerning natural philosophy throughout his years in Naples and publish *Campi Phlegraei*, an exquisite bilingual work of two well researched volumes. There was also a supplement. Unlike the other volumes it was rushed so that he could present London with the first account of the massive volcanic activity of 1779. It is interesting as adding to the sum of knowledge concerning huge eruptions but is best treated separately. Volume I consisted of five detailed letters covering the decade 1766 to 1770 and addressed to the Royal Society, prefaced with a scholarly introduction. It was a lavish production costing a substantial sum, made the more expensive by the

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[263] Brien Connell, *Portrait of a Whig Peer. Compiled from the papers of the Second Viscount Palmerston, 1739-1802* (Andre Deutsch, London, 1957).
[264] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol.1, p. 14 (Vesuvius); For example: p. 26, Portici; p.34, Island of Ischia; p. 35, Puzzoli. Letter IV is devoted to his exploration of Sicily.
[265] Edward Edwards, *Lives of the Founders of the British Museum: with Notices of its Chief Augmentors and other Benefactors, 1570-1870* (London, 1870), p. 350.

inclusion of 53 detailed coloured plates drawn by Peter Fabris. It leads to the inevitable question of why Hamilton chose to publish it, as it was quite separate from his role as Envoy Extraordinary.

Hamilton's need for personal and academic recognition by his nexus of friends and acquaintances has already been discussed, but the paucity of his formal education should be emphasised. Connoisseurship did not require years at university, and Hamilton's love of fine art and his keen eye gained him a reputation as a connoisseur prior to the Naples appointment, which offered him much scope to develop his wide interests further. Yet the posting was to a diplomatic backwater, in which he may well have become a fading memory for his sophisticated social circle in London. To prevent such an outcome, Hamilton was proactive in maintaining contacts with Britain, as his personal correspondence demonstrates.[266]

Furthermore, he used *Campi Phlegraei* to stress the close connection he developed with the Neapolitan Royal Family, and in the process enhanced his reputation in Britain. The following example links his growing reputation as a natural philosopher with his singular role in the Kingdom, combining Enlightenment thinking with his personal status. The notes accompanying C*ampi Phlegraei,* Volume II, *Plate 38* (*Figure 4*) begin with an important statement concerning Hamilton's status:

> A night view of the current of lava that ran from Mount Vesuvius towards Resina, the 11th May 1771, when the author had the honour of conducting THEIR SICILIAN MAJESTIES to see that curious phenomenon [sic].

The image portrays the Royal Family in a potentially dangerous situation as they watch an intense lava cascade. It legitimised Hamilton's work in natural philosophy as

[266] Morrison, Alfred, *The collection of autograph letters and historical documents formed by Alfred Morrison.* Second Series, *The Hamilton and Nelson Letters* (Privately printed, 1893). This extensive collection of Hamilton's correspondence illustrates the varied social contacts maintained by the Envoy, as shown in the Appendix to the thesis.

suitable for those of the highest social rank. With the Queen and her ladies also present, it was apparent that women were free to participate in Enlightenment pursuits. Hamilton's many publications from 1766 onward show him as a scholar manqué, his wide interests demonstrated only in part by his letters to the Royal Society. Such was his determination that rapidly he was accepted within the Republic of Letters. Membership of the Royal Society consisted of the well-born and the scholarly. By courting it and having his letters published, Hamilton could achieve, in part at least, his aims of remaining known in London and simultaneously become an established savant within the field of natural philosophy. The letters thus afforded him a voice in London's learned and aristocratic circles while he lived in far-off Naples. The President of the Royal Society had considerable influence on the papers read at its meetings and published in their *Philosophical Transactions*. In general, they promoted physico-mathematical experimental learning. The Royal Society's brief was wide, within the remit of empirical observation. It received many papers on a broad range of topics. There was a stringent editing process before a paper was read, and many were rejected. Those accepted were subject to editing. In relation to Hamilton, Karen Wood commented that:

> Society meetings were an institutionalised mechanism for witness multiplication and the assessment of testimony. . . When those present listened to those spoken words they collectively relived Hamilton's experiences of attention and description. His letters thus became events that can be described as oral spectacles.[267]

Hamilton carefully worded his letters to attract maximum interest and involvement from those listening. The Royal Society had its own museum, which featured a growing number of minerals gifted to itby Hamilton. Those discussed in his letters were available for members to view. One instance deserves particular mention, when

[267] Karen Wood, 'Making and Circulating Knowledge through Sir William Hamilton's *Campi Phlegraei*', *British Society for the History of Science,* 39 March, 2006, p. 76.

he brought Vesuvius to London. It took the form of a large transparency of Plate XXXVIII from *Campi Phegraei* Volume II (*Figure 4*), measuring some 80 x 130 x 50 centimetres, and was contained in a wooden box. Behind it was a manually operated mechanism which created the effect of a continuous stream of lava, varying in colour intensity. As the mechanism was turned, levers allowed elements to fall, creating a loud noise. The Secretary to the Royal Society, Sir John Pringle (1707-1782), wrote that 'The representation of that terrible [volcanic] scene by means of transparent colours was so lively that there seemed to be nothing wanting in us distant spectators but the fright that anybody must have been seized who was near.' [268]

Hamilton's letters were skilful personal propaganda, demonstrating that he was expert in appearing modest while gently asserting his position as an expert natural philosopher. A good example of this skill was when he related that:

> Our guide proposed the expedient of walking across [a glowing stream of lava] which, to our astonishment, he instantly put in execution and with so little difficulty that we followed him without hesitation, having felt no other inconveniency than what proceeded from the violence on the heat upon our legs and feet. . . However, this experiment should not be tried except in real emergency.[269]

The reaction of the Fellows of the Royal Society to this final flash of humorous irony can be imagined. The reality behind the quip was that it showed Hamilton to be a fearless investigator into the functioning of volcanic forces.

From an early date Hamilton held the Royal Society in high regard; its membership included many of his friends, and he expressed delight when it published his letters. His pleasure is shown in the opening paragraph of Letter II:

> *To the Right Honourable the Earl of Morton, President of the Royal Society, Naples, December 29th 1767.*
>
> The Favourable reception which my account of last year's eruption of Mount Vesuvius met with from your Lordship; the approbation which the Royal Society

[268] See Andrews, 'Sir William Hamilton's Love Affair with Vesuvius', p. 13.
[269] Hamilton,W, Supplement to *Campi Phlegraei* (1779), p. 4.

> was pleased to show by having ordered the same to be printed in their Philosophical Transactions. . . encourage me to trouble you with a plain narrative of what came immediately [after].[270]

The Envoy was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1766. Following this he proudly used 'FRS' after his name on his publications. In real terms it placed him on equal footing in scholarship, if not wealth, with his elite friends in England. It was *Letter Four*, *The Account of the Journey to Etna* which gave Hamilton further academic authority. The Royal Society awarded annually the Copley Medal for the best paper read during a year and Hamilton was awarded this honour as a result of *Letter Four*.

From having no obvious knowledge of natural philosophy, within three years of reaching Naples Hamilton had become a significant force within the field. The early letters were mainly descriptive, but they became increasingly analytical as his knowledge grew. The first paragraph of *Letter I* to the Royal Society was tentative: 'I shall confine myself merely to the many extraordinary appearances that have come under my own inspection and leave their explanation to the more learned in Natural Philosophy.'[271] Yet when Hamilton wrote the introduction to *Campi Phlegraei* in 1776, after twelve years exploring the Neapolitan Caldera, he was prepared to take issue with the foremost European eminences in natural philosophy. Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (1707–1788) was described by Ernst Mayr '(a)s the father of all thought in natural history in the second half of the 18th century'.[272] The once obscure Neapolitan Envoy dared to state of the Comte that 'Monsieur Buffon in his Theory of the Earth, seems to have. . . .treated subterranean fires with so little respect as to

[270] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. I, p. 22.
[271] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 14.
[272] Ernst Mayr, *The Growth of Biological Thought* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981, p. 33.

allow them only the power of raising little hills here and there.'[273] It was a brave statement and, as will be seen, an accurate one.

To reach his conclusions, Hamilton encountered significant danger on Vesuvius. Sarah Goldsmith argues convincingly that participation in the Grand Tour for the elite was an opportunity to demonstrate both their calm manliness in apposition to the fears and terrors of their servants, members of a lower order.[274] Visitors who accompanied Hamilton on Vesuvius had cause to be alarmed. One such was Frederick Hervey (1730–1803), later Earl of Bristol who, as has been noted, was wounded in the arm when observing Vesuvius in action.[275]

Most of what is known of Hamilton's geological discoveries is contained within *Campi Phlegraei* and his later letters to the Royal Society. One of Hamilton's motives was to share his experiences. They combine geological time with human activity, emphasising the might of the former compared with the ephemeral existence of mankind. What is frequently overlooked is that this work was the cumulation of several previous publications of the letters contained in *Campi Phlegraei* and is perhaps his most influential work. *The Annual Register* used extracts from the letters, so making a broader public aware of Hamilton and his work. Some years earlier, they also appeared as a cheap book published by Thomas Caddell of the Strand, 'For the convenience of [lovers of natural history] as may have an opportunity of visiting the curious spots described in them.' This ignored the fact that a visit to Naples was possible only for the monied and leisured classes. In Caddell's edition of the letters, Hamilton noted that *Letter 5* to the Royal Society had been edited and it:

> Was not received by Dr Maty in its present form and is rather the substance of an explanatory catalogue which was sent to that gentlemen with sundry

[273] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. I, p. 3.
[274] Sarah Goldsmith, 'Dogs, Servants and Masculinity; Writing about Danger on the Grand Tour', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies,* 40, 1, p. 5.
[275] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol I., Letter 1, p. 17.

> specimens of the different materials that compose the soil described in the preceding letter; which catalogue remains with the specimens in the museum of the Royal Society, and, I flatter myself, the satisfaction of the curious in natural history.[276]

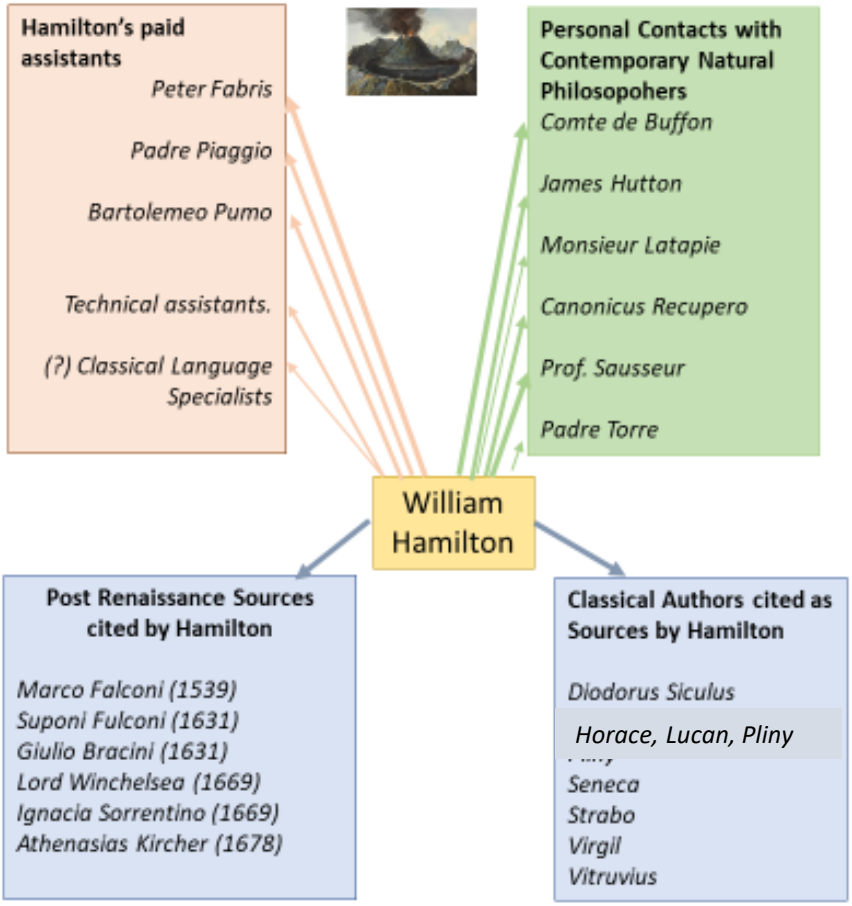
In *Rees' Cyclopaedia*, published after Hamilton's death, under 'Volcanoes' there were frequent verbatim quotations from Hamilton's letters.[277]

Campi Phlegraei, with its numerous footnotes, offered a different experience from reading or listening to the letters read at the Royal Society's meetings. The dramatic events were offered in two interlocking volumes. They contained not just descriptions of volcanic events, but also Peter Fabris's eye-catching, detailed illustrations

[276] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei,* Vol.1, Letter 5, p. 53. Dr Maty (1718–1786) was Secretary to the Royal Society.

[277] *The Cyclopædia; or Universal Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, and Literature* was an important 19th-century British encyclopaedia.

Network Diagram 3. Hamilton's sources for his study of Natural Philosophy



The chart above is based on Hamilton's work, *Campi Phlegraei*. It is not exhaustive but illustrates the breadth of Hamilton's research. The width of the arrows is indicative of the strength of the tie between the Envoy and the individual. Reference is made to most of the actors in the text of this chapter. Pliny, Strabo and Diodorus Siculus are the most frequently referenced of the Classical writers, while Falconi, Bracici, and Lord Winchelsea are important amongst more recent sources.

It seems unlikely that Hamilton had either the time or the skills to have read and comprehended all those mentioned. It is known that he employed his 'archaeologist' to assist with collections and it is reasonable to extrapolate that he employed scholars to assist with ancient texts. However, most of his discoveries within the field of Natural Philosophy were the original work of the Envoy, based on his empirical observations.

Hamilton was insistent that these were accurate (See *Figures 5 &7*):

Being sensible of the great difficulty of conveying a true idea of the curious country I have described, by words alone, particularly to those who have not had an opportunity of visiting this part of Italy; soon after my return from employed Mr Peter Fabris, a most ingenious and able artist, a native of Great Britain, to take Drawings of every interesting spot described in my letters, in which each stratum is represented in its true colours.[278]

[278] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. I, p. 5.

There remains the question of how much of *Campi Phlegraei* was Hamilton's own work. He praises Fabris for the images in Volume II while stressing that the artist worked strictly to his instruction.[279] Yet the statement was not strictly true, for some of the coloured plates predate Hamilton's arrival.[280] Herringman argues that there was a social class issue at play. He suggests that Fabris's role was ambivalent. The artist is accepted as a source of knowledge and authority, but at the same time his role is that of knowledge worker under Hamilton's patronage.[281] There remains the question of the deep scholarship shown mostly in *Campi Phlegraei*'s footnotes. My contention is that it was impossible for Hamilton to have been the sole author, as shown in Network Diagram 3 (above). From Westminster School he must surely have known of Pliny the Younger's account of the Vesuvian eruption which destroyed the Buried Cities. This famous passage is frequently mentioned. As will be seen in the next section, there are occasions when he names those who assisted him but does not often acknowledge from whom he gained the dense historical background.[282] A final assessment of *Campi Phlegraei* must be that for all the caveats expressed it was the first book to explore the natural history and natural philosophy of a volcanic area in such a thorough and integrated fashion, offering many new insights into volcanology and seismology. It is to these that the discourse now turns.

Hamilton's Field work and Discoveries in Campi Flegrei

Hamilton's achievements in *Campi Phlegraei* were, to an extent, dependent on others for vital information he was able to deploy in his own research. An exhaustive

[279] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 5.
[280] Ibid., Vol II, plates V, X and XII.
[281] Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*, p. 96.
[282] An example can be found in Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol,.I, p 28. Diodorus Siculus and 'A book from Lecce', dated 1632, appear in the same footnote.

list of the knowledge workers who assisted him is beyond the scope of this thesis, but the footnotes in *Campi Phlegraei* detail scores of books and many who commented on natural philosophy (*See NW.3)*. Three examples are offered here. One of the most important was Hamilton's contemporary, Professor Saussure of Geneva, greatly admired by him, as mentioned earlier. He is quoted at length on pages eight to eleven in the Introduction to *Campi Phlegraei.* Hamilton's famed letter to the Royal Society concerning his visit to Sicily praised 'Canonico Recupero an ingenious priest of Catania, who is the only person there acquainted with the mountain'. On his own admission, the Envoy learnt much from him during his time on Etna. The name of Peter Fabris, the illustrator of Volume II, occurs many times in the thesis. His artistry was vital to the success of *Campi Phlegraei.* Without the absorbing illustrations, so carefully cross-matched by Hamilton to Volume I, the work would be much diminished.

One curious source of information, unacknowledged in *Campi Phlegraei*, was that of Hamilton's Consul Isaac Jamineau (1710–1789), whose animus towards Hamilton has never been explained. Several times Jamineau unsuccessfully attempted to undermine Hamilton as Envoy.[283] The reason may lie in the three letters Jamineau sent to Sir Francis Stiles FRS (d. 1762) in 1754, which described his own investigations into seismic activity around Naples. They were then published in a précised form in the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions*. The quotations following demonstrates that Hamilton replicated Jamineau's own field work, undertaken a decade earlier and that Pumo, walking across red-hot lava, was simply following an existing tradition. They make clear that Hamilton replicated some of Jamineau's work. Note how closely the first extract aligns with the process illustrated in *Figure 5*:

> At that time the descent was about eighty feet, which Mr. Jamineau measured himself. On his second visit, in September, the crescent was turned to a cone,

[283] National Archive. State Papers 93/21/31 & 93/21/43.

> but much higher than before, being increased in proportion to the fire, that now discharged, by frequent explosions, thousands of stones on fire. On a third visit, in the middle of October, the cone seemed lower, which was owing to the rising of the bottom of the cup, whose depth from eighty feet was decreased to fifty. [284]
>
> The lava was actually running in many places; and where it was not, the fire was universally visible within a foot or two of the surface. They descended to the bottom, and approached the running lava, whose progress was so slow, that they sat a full quarter of an hour within three yards of it, before they were obliged to shift their places. Such of the guides, as had shoes on, ran over the very matter as it was proceeding. [285]

In the same letter, Jamineau also described a 'lava-fall', a phenomenon that Hamilton saw himself and which in *Campi Phlegraei* was one of the most striking images, replete with the Neapolitan Court viewing it (*Figure 4*).[286] In preparation for his new post in Naples, it seems certain that Hamilton would read a letter from one who was to serve under him as consul. Inevitably, Jamineau's irritation and jealousy was raised when Hamilton, his superior and a man with wealth and friends in high places to back him, replicated Jamineau's previous experiments, especially as his work had been previously published in the *Philosophical Transactions*.[287] Hamilton's success in publishing *Campi Phlegraei* in French and English as original research ignored Jamineau's work, undertaken a decade previously. In his defence it must be noted that Hamilton's research was frequently undertaken with a far greater level of sophistication. What is demonstrated is that Hamilton was content to use evidence, acknowledged or not, to enhance his own research. It also explains the puzzle of why Jamineau was so hostile to the Envoy.

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[284] Substance of three letters from Isaac Jamineau, His Majesty's Consul at Naples to Sir Francis Stiles, FRS', *Proceedings of the Royal Society*, Vol. 49, January 1, 1755, p. 25.
[285] Ibid.
[286] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei,* Vol. II, plate 38.
[287] Ibid., Vol. II, plate 2 demonstrated the scientific manner in which Hamilton replicated Jamineau's previous calculations.

Hamilton and Geology

To clarify the technical aspects of Hamilton's work within natural philosophy, some current geological terminology is used. For the most part, he worked within the relatively narrow geographical area of the caldera surrounding Naples, which included Campi Flegrei, Vesuvius, the Lipari Islands and Sicily. As his mastery of the geology grew, so his observations moved from this specific area to offer some thoughts on the universality of the discoveries he made. In this he was assisted by corresponding with men such as Sir Joseph Banks (1743–1820), who had circumnavigated the world and was to become President of the Royal Society.[288]

Modern geologists have a wealth of highly specialised instruments to assist them, but Hamilton's scientific aids were minimal. He used both 'Parisian' and 'Mr Fahrenheit's' thermometers, employed to measure the temperature of hot springs, while barometers measured pressure at various altitudes. An example was his intention to measure the relative pressures at the base and the summit of Etna: 'I brought two barometers and a thermometer with me from Naples, intending to have one with a person at the foot of the mountain, whilst we made our observation with the other.'[289] He used telescopes to bring him close to inaccessible areas of volcanoes during times of eruption. Soldiers were employed to make measurements that Hamilton was unable to undertake, such as that shown in *Figure 5.2*.[290] There were also the simple experiments that he undertook. At a distance of ten feet from a liquid lava stream, he threw rocks into the flow assuming that they would sink, but instead they remained on the surface.[291] After lava had apparently cooled, he thrust

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[183] Joseph Banks, *Papers and The Endeavour Journal of Joseph Banks, 1768–1771* (State Library of New South Wales) http://southseas.nla.gov.au/journals/banks/contents.html (Accessed 24 10 2019).
[289] Hamilton, *Campi Flegrei*, Vol. I, p. 48.
[290] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 23.
[291] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 18.

sticks into crevasses only to find that they burst into flame.[292] Sometimes his experiments covered a significant distance. *Campi Phlegraei*, Letter V, *On the soil of Naples*, explained how he measured the weight of rocks that fell during volcanic explosions: 'At Pompeii I have found them of eight-pound weight, when at Castle-a-Mare [some thirty miles distant] the largest do not weigh an ounce.' [293] Knowledge workers were important in his studies. Padre Antonio Piaggio, for example, was employed by Hamilton for some fifteen years. He lived close to Vesuvius, living on a small income from Sir William. He kept minutely detailed diaries of the mountain's activities, shared with his patron. It is an illustration of how Hamilton garnered information that would be published under his own name. [294]..

With these resources, the Envoy set about the task of comprehending seismic activity in Naples and its hinterland. In the process, he was the first to comprehend the nature of a caldera. It is a volcanic area containing multiple volcanoes fed by a single huge magma reservoir. There may be upwards of twenty volcanoes within a single caldera. Modern geologists estimate that the Neapolitan Caldera was formed about 39,000 years ago, extruding 150 kilometres of lava.[295] Within it are 24 craters and volcanic features, a significant number of which lie under the Bay of Pozzuoli. The area records bradyseismic activity over many centuries. One striking example is at the Marcellum of Pozzuoli, where bands of boreholes left by marine molluscs on marble columns demonstrate that the level of the site in relation to sea level has

[292] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 30.
[293] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 57.
[294] Currently they remain unpublished in the Royal Society's archive, gifted to them by Hamilton after his final return from Naples
[295] Geological Society of America, 'Mysterious Eruption came from Campi Flegrei caldera' *ScienceDaily*, 25 April 2019. <www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/04/190425122344.htm>.

varied since the cataclysmic destruction of 79 CE.[296] Were the caldera as a whole rather than Vesuvius alone to erupt, the effects would have global implications. [297]

Hamilton recorded many features of the Caldera, his thinking gradually moving towards a concept of them as global phenomena rather than events discrete to the Neapolitan caldera. Many were recorded visually by Peter Fabris for Volume II of *Campi Phlegraei.* *Figure 5.1* illustrates the volcanic nature of the islands scattered off the coast of Naples. Modern aerial photography gives credence to Hamilton's opinion that the land and sea surrounding Naples and Sicily together mark the circumference of a huge caldera. From a position of ignorance, Hamilton was to make this deduction during his Naples residency. He wished to explore it further rather than draw the simple conclusion that the area around Naples was actively volcanic.

Once he had visited Sicily and the Lipari Islands, he became aware that volcanoes did not need to be huge structures and that cones emerging from minor volcanoes might rise very rapidly but then collapse into themselves. During his visit to Etna he experienced a moment of anagnorisis in relation to Campi Flegrei. 'I counted forty-four little mountains. . . all of a conical form and each having its crater; many with timber trees flourishing'.[298] From this he deduced that not only was the land volcanic, but that the Caldera passed under the sea. Therefore, if it ended beneath the sea to the West, then it was necessary to establish its eastern borders. For him it was the simpler part of the exercise. The Apennine mountain range behind Vesuvius is limestone and fossiliferous in its composition, whereas Campi Flegrei was wholly

[296] Bradyseismic activity occurs when the Earth's crust rises and falls in relation to the volume of magma beneath it.
[297] G. Orsia, S. De Vitab and M. di Vitob, 'The Restless, Resurgent Campi Flegrei Nested Caldera (Italy): Constraints on its Evolution and Configuration' *Journal of Volcanology and Geothermal Research* 74, 3/4 , December 1996, pp. 179–214. For a popular account see Russ Juskian, 'A Massive Volcano Beneath Italy is Stirring', http://discovermagazine.com/2017/nov/fields--of-fire (Accessed 16 06 2019).
[298] Hamilton, *Campi Flegrei*, Vol. I, p. 50.

volcanic in its nature. With keen observation and knowledge formed through an empirical methodology, Hamilton established the broad area of the Neapolitan Caldera.

What drew tourists to Naples was the joint attractions of the Buried Cities and an erupting Vesuvius. Understanding the nature of volcanoes proved an important part of Hamilton's discoveries in natural philosophy. Prior to Hamilton's work there was no agreement on their nature. Athanasius Kircher, working a century before Hamilton, has already been mentioned. Like him, Kircher was prepared to explore actively, even having himself lowered into Vesuvius' crater when it was in an eruptive mode. Yet he could do no more that theorise without empirical evidence to back him:

> These Vulcano's therefore are nothing but the vent-holes, or breath-pipes of Nature, to give vent to the superfluous choaking fumes and smoaky vapours, which fly upwards, and make way and free passage for the vehemency of the within-conceiving burning; and for the attraction and free entrance of the friendly cherishing Air, to revie and ventilate those suffocating flames, lest they should continually shake the foundations of the Ground with intolerable commotions and Earthquakes. [sic] [299]

It was Hamilton who recognised their immense land-building powers. Previously it had been thought that the huge volcanic cysts which occur within lava fields, when emptied, would result in the collapse of the external structure of the volcano.[300] Hamilton himself observed that there were voids beneath and within them, he himself descending into one such in Sicily:

> At the foot of the mountain raised by the eruption of the year 1669, there is a hole, through which by means of a rope we descended into several subterraneous caverns, branching out and extending much further and deeper than we chose to venture. . . These undoubtedly contained the lava which extended quite to Catania.[301]

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[299] Athenasius Kircher, '*THE VULCANO'S: or,Burning and Fire-vomiting Mountains, Famous in the World: With their Remarkables* (London 1669), Chapter 2.
[300] Alfonso Brancato, Giuseppina Tusa, Mauro Coltelli, and Cristina Proietti, Probability hazard map for future vent opening at Etna volcano (Sicily, Italy). NASA Astrophysics Data System (ADS) (Undated) (Accessed 09 07 2019).
[301] Hamilton, *Campi Flegrei*, p. 42.

In direct contradiction to the concepts of the Plutonists, Hamilton found it easy to disprove the argument of many contemporaries that volcanic lava was ejected only at the mountain's summit. Buffon had argued that there were only small volumes of magma within the cone of a volcano. Modern research has indicated that, although magma might well have been contained within them, cysts are formed during the cooling process following an eruption, whereas the volume of erupted material is many times greater than the void remaining. Hamilton demonstrated repeatedly that the land-building properties of lava ejections are colossal.[302] The evidence for volcanic land-building he found in Sicily was overwhelming. Determining that the soils of Etna were volcanic, he commented that 'the circuit of the lower Region, forming the basis of this great Volcano is upwards of 100 miles'.[303] This apparent 'throw-away' sentence demonstrated that volcanoes, over an immense time scale, can form huge land masses. The view of the rationalists was that magma only existed in the cone of a volcano to be ejected during an eruption.[304] Such a theory, aimed at minimising the land building effects of volcanic activity, was wholly disproved by the Envoy.

Throughout *Campi Phlegraei* Hamilton observed that lava emerged through weaknesses throughout the cone of the volcano. *Plate XII* of Volume II (*Figure 10.5*) makes the point well. The implication was that the lava was contained in deep subterraneous reservoirs, far greater in volume than could be contained within the cone. While in Sicily he observed:

> We saw from hence the whole flow of ancient lava. . .it ran into the sea near Taormina, which is not less than thirty miles from whence it issued and in many parts is fifteen miles in breadth and fifty feet or more in depth. You may judge, Sir of the prodigious quantities of matter emitted in a great eruption of the mountain.[305]

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[302] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 23.
[303] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 39.
[304] Joseph Smith, *Buffon's Natural History Carefully Abridged. In Four Parts; Beasts, Birds, Fishes, Reptiles* (London, 1842), Vol.1, p. 34.
[305] Hamilton, *Campi Flegrei*, Vol. I, p. 50.

Hamilton's knowledge of Campi Flegrei and Mount Vesuvius gave his writing an authority that could not be matched by other commentators. In the 1776 preface to *Campi Phlegraei* he categorically asserted that eruptions were simply a force of nature and had no connection with an avenging deity. This opinion was reinforced in his letter of 1795 to the Royal Society when he commented that:

> I am sorry to say, that even so late as in the accounts of the earthquakes in Calabria in 1783, nature is taxed with being malevolent, and bent upon destruction. In a printed account of another great eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 1631, by Antonio Santorelli, Doctor of Medicine, and professor of natural philosophy in the university of Naples, and at the head of the fourth chapter of his book, are these words: *Se questo incendio sia opera demonii* ? [Whether this eruption be the work of devils?]. [306]

Hamilton's use of Santorelli was to demonstrate that as early as 1631 supernatural interpretations of volcanic activity were questioned. In the second half of the eighteenth century, increasing numbers shared Santorelli's doubts. References to the mountain abound in the diaries of Grand Tourists, but without scientific evaluation of volcanic phenomena. Margaret Grenville visited Naples in 1761 and described the sublime emotion she felt on witnessing '(a) magnificent eruption at Mount Vesuvius which created two streams of lava that winded down the hill at considerable length'. Perhaps to show a wide education, she concluded that this scene 'Perfectly answered, Mr Burke's idea of the sublime' (*Figure 4*).[307]

One example of Hamilton's *modus operandi* was his understanding of the shallow volcanic craters near Pozzuoli. One emitted jets of steam with sulfurous fumes. Hamilton mused on the significance of the area, and decided it was once very active:

> We have then the Solfaterra, which was certainly a volcano, and has ceased erupting [but is] over abounding with sulphur. We have the Lago d'Averno

[306] Royal Society, *Philosophical Transactions* (1795), Vol. 85.
[307] S. Cassani, S. ed., *In the Shadow of Vesuvius* (Electa, Naples, 1990), p. 136.

> and the Lago d'Agnano, both of which were formerly volcanoes and Astoni which still retains its form more than any of these.[308]

Clearly, he discerned that the volcanic area was far wider than Vesuvius. In this case he was dealing with land-based volcanic phenomena that he could explore at his ease. Throughout the area, phenomena that existed on Vesuvius were found in the hinterland, one of the facts that eventually led him to determine the dimensions of Campi Flegrei.

Throughout his writings the land-building features of volcanic eruptions were emphasised. The exemplar material chosen below demonstrates the interaction of Hamilton's field work, observation and recording detail. There had been no significant previous attempts to follow the course of earlier eruptions and estimate the length or depth of the lava flow.

> On Saturday 24th [1767] the lava ceased running; the extent of the lava, from the spot where I first saw it break out, to its extremity where it surrounded the chapel of Saint Vito, is above six miles. In the deep valley that lies between Vesuvius and the hermitage*, the lava is in some places near two miles broad and in most places sixty to seventy feet deep; the lava ran down a hollow way called Fossa Grande*, made by the torrents of rain water; it is not less than 200 feet deep yet the lava in one place has filled it up.[309]

Figure 5.2, the frontispiece to Volume II of *Campi Phlegraei*, illustrates in minute detail the growth of Vesuvius between 8th July and 22nd October 1769, using seven illustrations of the mountain's growth during this period. Hamilton employed a specialist, the army officer Don Andrea Pigonati, who employed trigonometry in recording. It is an excellent example of the detail and accuracy

[308] Hamilton, *Campi Flegrei*, Vol. I, p.35. The passage is referenced with pictures illustrating Volume II.
[309] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 29. The * marks the points in Hamilton's text which are cross-referenced to Volume II.

of the Envoy's work. It should be examined in conjunction with *Figure 5.2*, which further illustrates the detail within Fabris's drawings.

> **Plan of the top of Mount Vesuvius with the gradual increase of the little mountain in its Crater from the 8th of July to the 29th of October 1767.**
>
> 1) State of the little mountain within the Crater on the first observation, July 8th 1767.
> 2) July 25th, the matter above the dotted line added by explosion since the last observation.
> 3) August the 6th, addition of erupted material since the first observations.
> 4) Aug 17th further additions.
> 5) September 3rd Further increase of the little mountain.
> 6) State of the little mountain October 18th, the day before the eruption.[310]

This quotation, taken together with *Figure 5.2.,* is offered as evidence of Hamilton's thoroughgoing empirical analysis of the activity within a volcano prior to its eruption. As shown by Consul Jamineau's observations a decade earlier, there had been some previous attempts at detailed observations, but Hamilton's was by far the most intricate and scholarly.[311]

The Envoy's success in defining the boundaries of the Neapolitan caldera demonstrated his ability to distinguish between fossil-bearing sedimentary rocks and the fundamentally igneous nature of those within the Caldera itself. He delved far deeper than this in noticing that when viewing an exposed outcrop there might be found fertile layers between strata. Peter Fabris drew an outstanding example in the cliffs of the Island of Ventetene, where layers of volcanic materials sandwich fertile strata (*Figure 7*). Human interest is added to the image by the clever juxtaposition of two sailing ships between the spot where the image was executed and the Island itself. Hamilton made frequent mention of the phenomena of alternating lava and a

[310] Notes to the frontispiece of Ibid., Vol. I.
[311] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 57.

fertile level. He termed it 'good mould'. What Hamilton observed and recognised was that after lava has settled over a previously fertile area, given time, it will break down into mineral-rich fragments supporting vegetation. In turn, decay and leaf-fall will accumulate to form fertile soil. He assessed it as follows:

> Where the stratum of good soil was thick, it was evident to me that many years had elapsed between one eruption and that which succeeded it. I do not pretend to say that a just estimate can be formed of the great age of volcanoes from this observation. For instance, should an explosion of pumice cover again the spot under which Pompeii is buried, the stratum of rich soil abovementioned would certainly lie between two beds of pumice & if a like accident had happened a thousand years ago the stratum of soil would certainly have wanted much of its present thickness. As the rotting of vegetables, manure etc. is ever increasing a cultivated soil . . . *I hope I may be allowed reasonably to conclude that the whole has been the production of a long series of eruptions, occasioned by subterraneous fire*.[312]

Within the statement lay Hamilton's belief that in the area he worked, 'Mountains are produced by Volcanos and not volcanos by mountains'.[313]

During his visit to Etna he had observed that:

> The lavas of Etna are very commonly fifteen or twenty miles in length and fifty feet or more in depth, you may judge, Sir, of the prodigious quantities of matter emitted in a great eruption of the mountain . . . The most extensive lavas of Vesuvius do not exceed seven miles in length. The operations on nature on the one mountain and the other are certainly the same.[314]

On several occasions Hamilton observed lava erupting low down the side of a volcano, demonstrating that it was not simply matter within its main cone that was ejected, such as Athanasius Kircher and the Comte de Buffon suggested, but that quantities of material rose up from subterraneous sumps of molten magma.[315] In the

[312] Ibid, Vol. I, p. 23 is a typical example. Author's italics
[313] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 36.
[314] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 50.
[315] Ibid, Vol. I, p. 23 is a typical example.

following extract, Hamilton observed very rapid mountain building, formed on previously flat ground, concurrent with an eruption:

> [Here] is an instance of a mountain of considerable height and dimension formed in a plain, by mere explosion in the space of forty-eight hours. The earthquake having been sensibly felt at a great distance from the spot where the opening was made, proves clearly that the subterraneous fire was at a great depth below the surface of the plain. . . Does this circumstance evidently contradict the system of M. Buffon, and of all the Natural Historians, who have placed the seat of the fire of Volcanos towards the centre or near the summit of the mountain, which they supposed to furnish the matter emitted? [316]

The weather, quarrying and roadbuilding in Campi Flegrei left strata exposed in many places. Via observation, reading and discussion with knowledge workers, Hamilton sought to make sense of them. Further detailed information of the strata of the Caldera would have come from his mountain ascents as well as from everyday travel in the area, with the Envoy pausing at interesting formations along the route. His fascination with lava in all its forms was particularly marked when dealing with the abundant tuff, an igneous rock formed from the products of an explosive volcanic eruption. The volcano blasts water, rock, ash, magma and other materials from its vent. These ejecta travel through the air, falling back to earth in the area surrounding the volcano. Tuff forms when the ejected material is compacted and cemented into a rock. Fabris drew a sheer-sided cutting of tuff which facilitated the construction of a new road between Naples and Pausilipo.[317] Hamilton's objective in using it was to demonstrate the thickness of lava that could be deposited by one eruption, in this case some 70 to 90 feet high. It was used extensively as a building material from antiquity onward, again noted by the Envoy.

[316] Ibid. Vol. I, p. 77.
[317] Ibid., Vol. II, plate XVI.

Hamilton engaged in valuable geoseismic work following the huge eruption of 1779, even constructing an isoseismic map.[318] He visited the area surrounding Oppido, where he observed the descending degree of damage caused by the earthquake, commenting that 'Perhaps an opening may have been made at the bottom of the sea by the same kind of matter that gave rise to the Lipari Islands'.[319] He hazarded a guess that the actual epicentre of the earthquake was between Stromboli and Calabria, a point on which modern experts agree. Of itself this is significant research which led to his reasoned conclusion that the Tyrrhenian Sea around the Lipari islands remained seismically active.

The hot springs and thermal vents of Campi Flegrei, saturated with volcanic minerals, presented themselves differently from site to site. These minerals fascinated Hamilton and he devoted Plates 42 to 54 of *Campi Phlegraei* Volume II as illustrations. (See *Figure 7.2*). They offered readers of *Campi Phlegraei* a visual experience whose learned commentary gave meaning to what were previously simply lumps of rock. There was a considerable demand for attractive mineral specimens, both as objects for cabinets of curiosities, and for commercial use. In Volume II the plates showing minerals are presented in a manner suitable for a private collection, even being advertised for purchase at Fabris's studio.[320]

Hamilton's correspondence indicated that many from Britain used the Envoy as a supplier of minerals. Many asked favours of him. His friend Lord Mountstuart wrote 'I beg the favour of you to send me another lava box, begging many pardons for using

[318] William Hamilton, 'An Account of the Earthquakes Which Happened in Italy, from February to May 1783'. By Sir William Hamilton, Knight of the Bath, F. R. S. To Sir Joseph Banks, Bart. P. R. S., *Philosophical Transactions, Royal Society*, Vol. 73, Letter 12.
[319] Hamilton, *Campi Flegrei*, Vol. I, p. 60, endnote.

you so little like an Envoye Extrordinaire'. [321]. The letter was dated May 1765, only six months after Hamilton had taken up his post and may indicate an early recognition of his interest in minerals. Charles Greville was a keen mineral collector and his uncle assisted him with his hobby:

> I shall by degrees make you a compleat collection of the Cristalls of Vesuvius and I will write to Sicily for specimens. I saw the other day . . some cristals of Sulphur of Sicily, the largest and finest I ever saw [sic].[322]

Hamilton made significant gifts of minerals to the British Museum, housed today in the Natural History Museum in South Kensington and the Museum of the Royal Society.[323]

Volcanic gasses were a dangerous feature of the volcanic terrain, which Hamilton encountered regularly, and made frequent observations about them. Locally they were termed *mofete*. Because of a dearth of chemists, the Envoy was unable to have it analysed, noting only that it killed rapidly those who inhaled it. Later it was identified as a combination of carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and oxygen. Ever practical, he recorded a farmer's pigs being overcome with it on Vesuvius' slopes. Lake Avernus, in particular, was renowned for its dangers. Hamilton observed:

> [Virgil states] that birds could not fly with safety over the Lake of Avernus, but they fell therein, a circumstance favouring my opinion, that this was once the mouth of a volcano. The vapour of the sulphur and other minerals must undoubtedly have been more powerful the further we go back in time.[324]

Hamilton described its devastating effects in a contemporary setting:

> Just before the eruption of 1767 a vapour of this kind burst into the King's chapel at Portici, by which a servant opening the door of it was struck down. About the same time as his Sicilian Majesty was shooting in a paddock near the Palace, a dog dropped down. A boy going to take him up dropped likewise. . . [It was] suspected the accident to have proceeded from a Mofeta.[325]

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[321] Morrison, Letter 5, Lord Montstuart to Hamilton from Rome. 07 05 1765).
[322] Ibid. William Hamilton to Charles Greville (Letter 76, Naples 16. 12. 1777).
[323] Hamilton, *Campi Flegrei*, Vol. I, p. 31.
[324] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 88.
[325] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 88.

The *mofete* was no respecter of persons. At the excavation sites workers were killed as well as such eminences as Karl Webber (1712–1764), the Swiss architect and engineer who first gave some order to the method of excavations at Herculaneum and Pompeii.

Although Hamilton's interest in chemistry was hampered by a lack of local specialists, nevertheless his experimental approach continued unabated. *Campi Phlegraei* frequently describes volcanic rocks and the minerals associated with them. Hamilton demonstrated a significant knowledge of the chemicals produced by eruptions and he noted the commercial use made of them, both latent and actual. *Campi Phlegraei, Volume II,* Plate 25 is a view of the Salfatara. Hamilton stands watching primitive industrial exploitation of the volcanic chemicals that have commercial application. Footnote 3 combined chemical knowledge with commerce:

> Spots where the vapour issues with most violence, and where sal ammoniac is formed on tiles placed there for that purpose. Pure sulphur is likewise produced here and a mixture of arsenic and sulphur cristallised of a beautiful red colour, which they call CINNABAR [see Volume II, plate LIII]. About 273 quintals of sulphur and 37 quintals of alum are sold from hence annually: but with proper attention this curious spot might turn to a much greater account [sic].[326]

As competent chemical analysts were unavailable in Naples, he sent boxes of specimens to London for analysis, which were then given as presents to the Royal Society and the British Museum.[327]

By the time of the 1779 eruption, Hamilton and Count Buffon were sharing geological experiences (*Figure 6*).[328] The Count showed Hamilton 'flexible capillary

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[326] Ibid., Vol. II, plate XXV, note 3. 1 quintal = 100 kilograms.
[327] Ibid. Vol. I, p. 31.
[328] https://www.britannica.com/science/volcanic-glass (Accessed 29 03 2016).
For a more detailed explanation see Fujioka Kantaro and Furuta Toshio, 'Petrography and Geochemistry of Volcanic Glass: Leg. 57, Deep Sea Drilling Project', *Ocean Research Institute,* University of Tokyo, Nakano (Undated).
http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.538.9736&rep=rep1&type=pdf (Accessed 12 01 2018).

yellow glas [sic] some of which were two or three feet long with small vitreous globules'.[329] Hamilton observed that they represented those he found at Ottaiano. He described what he saw and found, but did not have the knowledge to analyse it himself:

> In some parts [of a solid block of lava] there are large pieces of pure glass of a brown yellow colour, like that of which our common bottles are made and throughout its pores seem to be filled with perfect vitrifications of the same sort.[330]

We now know that glassy rock formed from lava or magma is in its composition close to granite (quartz plus alkali feldspar and small quantities of mica). In a molten form, the substance may reach very low temperatures without crystallising, but its viscosity may become very high. Because high viscosity greatly reduces crystallisation, a sudden drop in temperature when lava exits from a volcanic vent cools the material to a glass rather than allowing it to form crystals.

A related phenomenon that fascinated Hamilton and was recorded by Pliny, was the association of lightening within an ash plume during a particularly active phase in eruptions. Hamilton failed to explain it, but it is now known that when it occurs there is the highest temperature gradient. Lightning results from the separation of positively and negatively charged particles in the atmosphere. Once the charge separation becomes sufficient to overcome the insulating properties of air, electricity moves between the positively and negatively charged particles as bolts of lightning, which neutralises the charge. Beyond the science, such eruptions in modern parlance remain known as 'Plinian Eruptions'.[331]

There were two areas which greatly interested Hamilton but eluded substantive conclusions. He was fascinated by electricity, the study of which was in its infancy.

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[329] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei,* Supplement, p. 7.
[330] Hamilton, *Campi Flegrei*,Vol. I, p. 24.
[331] Pliny, *Letters*, VI.16.

Hamilton was particularly intrigued by the volcanic lightening he observed, just as Pliny the Younger had done before him (See *Figure 6*). Once more Hamilton failed to reach definitive conclusions about their cause:

> Sunday 25th, small ashes fell from the crater of the Volcano, and formed a vast column, as black as the mountain itself, so that the shadow of it was marked out on the surface of the sea; continual flashes of forked or zig-zag lightning shot from this black column, the thunder of which was heard in the neighbourhood of the mountain, but not in Naples: there were no clouds in the sky at the time, except those of smoak [sic] issuing from the crater of Vesuvius. I was most pleased with this phenomenon.[332]

It had been observed many times throughout the Common Era. Predictably, Hamilton used Pliny the Younger as an example:

> In all accounts of great eruptions of Mount Etna and Mount Vesuvius, I have found mention of this sort of lightening. Pliny the younger in his second letter to Tacitus, says that a black and horrible cloud covered them as Miseum (which is fifteen miles from the Volcano) and that flashes of zig-zag fire, like lightening, but stronger, burst from it.[333]

It is now known that electrical charges are generated when rock fragments, ash and ice particles in a volcanic plume collide and produce static charges. This lightning, local to the volcano, is generated within the ash cloud emerging from it. Volcanic eruptions also release large amounts of water, which help fuel accompanying thunderstorms. Hamilton tried, but failed, to comprehend the phenomenon, which Fabris vividly represented in Plate II of *Campi Phlegraei's* Supplement, which deals at length, but inconclusively, with glass 'bombs' that accompanied the lightning:

> When a piece of the solid fresh lava had been cracked in its fall without separating entirely, we always saw capillary fibres of perfect glass reaching from side to side within the cracks . . . The natural spun glass which fell at Ottaiano during this eruption . . . must have been formed, most probably, by the operation of such a sort of lava as has been just described, cracking and separating in the air at the time of its emission from the crater of the volcano, and by this means spinning out the pure vitrified matter from its pores, or cells,

[332] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. I, p. 35.
[333] Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 30.

> the wind at the same time, carrying off those filaments of glass as fast as they were produced.[334]

Today there is clarity concerning both the lightening and the formation of volcanic glass: We now know that it is obsidian, a mineral without crystals. The components within them are always the building blocks and for them to grow, the correct blocks must be present and able to connect within the lava. A modern assessment of the phenomena is that:

> Basically, the glass is rapidly chilled molten rock. All natural glasses are thermodynamically unstable and tend to alter chemically or to crystallize. The rate of these processes is determined by the chemical composition of the magma. The hot and fluid basaltic melts have a structure that allows for rapid crystal growth, and seldom forms glass selvages greater than a few centimetres thick.[335]

During a lull in the huge 1779 eruption, Hamilton recorded a new electro-static device in operation:

> The Duke of Controfino, a Neapolitan gentleman . . . told me that about half an hour after the great eruption had ceased, he had held a Leyden Bottle armed with pointed wire out of his window in Naples, it soon became fully charged.[336]

Hamilton linked the rapid charging of the jar with the eruption but was unable to draw any deductions from it.

The previous section has illustrated the depth and breadth of Hamilton's experiments within the field of natural philosophy. He went much further, using his knowledge to make universal conclusion to what he saw. His musings on the age of the Earth were fundamental to his thinking. During his time in Sicily, while climbing Etna he moved towards the concept of a timescale previously thought impossible:

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[334] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei,* Supplement, p. 25, fn. 'b'.
[335] I. Friedman and W. Long, 'Volcanic Glasses, their Origins and Alteration Processes', *Journal of Non-Crystalline Solids*, 67, September 1984, p. 127.
[336] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei,* Supplement, p. 12. The Leyden jar became very important in electrical research. Because it was more compact and easier to move than an electrostatic generator, experimenters could charge up their jars and take the stored electricity with them in the laboratory or outside. It was invented in 1745.

> So little progress has been made in the improvement of Natural History and particularly that part of it which regards the Theory of the Earth. *Nature moves slowly, it is difficult to catch her in the act.*[337]
>
> I do not wonder at the seeming security which these parts are inhabited, having been so long witness to the same near Vesuvius. *The operations of nature are slow: great eruptions do not frequently happen; each flatter himself it will not happen in his lifetime*, or, if it should, that the lava will spare his grounds, and indeed the great fertility in the neighbourhoods of Volcanos tempts people to inhabit them.[sic] [Author's italics]. [338]

A further major achievement was his belief in the universality of the volcanic events he discovered in the Naples region. Once again, his networks assisted him. By 1775 Joseph Banks was a regular correspondent. He had been the naturalist on Captain James Cook's (1728–1779) circumnavigation. His observations on nature around the globe demonstrated a universalist approach, which encouraged Hamilton to assert that the laws governing seismic events in Naples had worldwide application. Now a baronet, Banks became President of the Royal Society in 1778, a post he held until 1820.[339] In theory at least, he envied Hamilton's seismic adventures. In a note to him Banks commented that, 'I read your letters with that kind of fidgety anxiety which continually upbraids me for not being in a similar situation.'[340] Hamilton was moving towards a concept of universality, whereby events in Campi Flegrei might apply equally in similar geological structures worldwide. His long paper to the Royal Society in 1783 described the catastrophic earthquake of that year in great detail, analysing its effects over a wide area.[341] In it he argued for a universalist approach to natural philosophy, suggesting the importance he attached to the underlying laws.[342] Hamilton's universalist observations were strengthened when he noted familiar

[337] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei,* Vol. I, p 54.
[338] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 39.
[339] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*. pp, 98–99.
[340] Egerton Papers, 2641, f. 132.
[341] Hamilton, *An Account of the Earthquakes.*
[342] J. Delbourgo, J., *Collecting the World: The Life and Curiosity of Hans Sloane* (Random House, London, 2017), pp. 338–339.

volcanic phenomena away from Naples. Thus, the basalt found in Campi Flegrei contained the exact same properties as in Ireland's Giant's Causeway.[343] 'It can no longer be doubted that wherever there are basaltic columns of the nature of the Giants' Causeway. . . there have volcanos existed for they are merely lava.' [344] En route to Britain when on furlough he passed through Cologne:

> When I arrived at the gates of Cologne, I was struck with the sight of numberless basaltic columns inserted in the walls of the town; and I remarked, that columns of the same sort were universally used as polls in the streets, and at every door. They are chiefly pentagonal [and] they are very like the basaltes [sic] of the Giant's Causeway. I perceived likewise that the walls of most of the ancient buildings in the town of Cologne were of a tufa, exactly resembling that of Naples and its environs.[345]

Developing the universalist idea, referring to the Island of Ischia, he wrote:

> I have no doubt in my own mind that the Island itself rose up out of the sea in the same manner as some of the Azores. I am of the same opinion with respect to Mount Vesuvius . . . as having not seen in any one place what can be called virgin earth. [Referring to a well dug near his villa he noted] At twenty-five feet below the level of the sea they came to a stratum of lava, and God knows how much deeper they might still have found other lavas.[346]

Contemporary with *Campi Phlegraei*'s publication came news of a new volcanic island formed within the Santorini Caldera. Hamilton asserted that such phenomena were verified by ancient authors and had occurred regularly through the ages. He offered, as if from his own research, the dates of Vesuvius's eruptions from 3325 BCE to 1771 CE. He did not acknowledge Giulio Braccini as the source of the list, although he used his table in *Campi Phlegraei*. It may be that Hamilton was able to determine eruptions that occurred following Braccini's list and his own time.[347] What is clear is that Hamilton's understanding had grown exponentially since his first musing on

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[343] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei,* Vol. I, p. 7.
[344] M. Sleep, 'Sir William Hamilton, His Work and Influence in Geology', *Annuls of Science,* 25, 4, 1969, p.324. See also Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei,* Vol. I, p. 7.
[345] William Hamilton, 'A letter from Sir William Hamilton, K. B. F. R. S. to Sir John Pringle, Bart. P. R. S. giving an account of certain traces of volcano on the banks of the Rhine', *Royal Society, Philosophical Transactions*, Vol. 68, December 31, 1778.
[346] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei,* Vol. I, p. 34.
[347] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 51.

volcanoes in 1766. Hamilton's understanding of them was a further major area in which the Envoy broke new ground. By his careful observations, he demonstrated that both Kircher and Buffon were incorrect in asserting that liquid lava was to be found only in the cones of volcanoes, instead he demonstrated that liquid magma must be present in immense quantities in subterranean sumps

Geology After Hamilton

The next generation of geologists were ready to assume his mantel. Hamilton's thinking was not at the same level as that of the 'Father of Geology', James Hutton (1726–1797). In 1778, shortly after the most productive phase of Sir William's volcanic researches, Hutton used the phrase 'deep time' and concluded his 1788 paper with this momentous statement: 'The result, therefore, of our present enquiry is, that we find no vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end.'[348] Hutton's work underpins the geological principle of uniformitarianism to which Hamilton was moving. It was popularised by fellow Scottish geologist Charles Lyell (1797–1875) in his 1830 book, *Principles of Geology*. Uniformitarianism assumes that the processes we see operating in the present day have operated throughout geological time and space.

Succeeding generations gave William Hamilton a little recognition. Saussure was tardy in his acknowledgment. The Professor travelled in Germany, Italy and England, wrote extensively and is famous for his four-volume *Voyages dans Les Alpes* (1779–1796). Even though he imbibed Hamilton's increasing belief that the world was of extreme antiquity, he did not credit him for it, despite Hamilton's praise for him in *Campi Phlegraei.* Hamilton is accorded the briefest of mentions by Saussure in his later writings: '*Monsieur le Chavalier Hamilton me fit faire a Naples, cette observation*

[348] J. Hutton, *The Theory of the Earth* (Edinburgh, 1795).

sur un grand numbre de courans de Vesuve.' Hamilton accompanied James Hutton on a visit to Salisbury Crags in 1784, where they discussed various types of lava. Hutton would have read *Campi Phlegraei*, a mine of accurately recorded information, but did not credit Hamilton in his definitive work, *The Theory of the* Earth (1788). Far more generous was Dieudonne Dolomieu (1750–1801), who reproduced much of *Campi Phlegraei* in his *Memoirs sur les Isles Ponces* (1783), together with his own comments and adding some original observations. He concedes that '*Monsieur le Chevalier Hamilton est le premier Naturaliste qui ait vistie les Isle de Ponces.*' The great geologist Charles Lyell wrote of him that 'He explained in a rational manner many events as related in the language of some eyewitnesses, appeared marvellous and incredible.'[349] K. Von Zittel described *Campi Phlegraei* as 'This handsome volume with 59 coloured plates which still holds its reputation for further research.'[350] The place, Solfatera, occurs frequently in Hamilton's writing and has become a recognised term defined as a fumarole that gives off only sulphurous gases.

Although the study of geology has advanced exponentially since Hamilton's research, *Campi Phlegraei* remains a seminal work in understanding seismic phenomena. It is remarkable that, without a background in natural history, an erudite art connoisseur should make seminal discoveries in such a different field. *Campi Phlegraei* was far more than a bound volume of his letters to the Royal Society. No longer was he a mere correspondent hoping that the Editor of *Philosophical Transactions* would deem the letters worthy of inclusion in the Royal Society's *Proceedings*. They were the work of the 'Professor of Volcanos', Walpole's

[349] C. Lyell, *Principles of Geology or the Modern Changes of the Earth* (London, 1834).
[350] Karl von Zittel, *History of Geology and Palaeontology until the End of the Nineteenth Century* (W. Scott, London, 1901).

witty title for Hamilton, both highly readable and informative for those with a wide variety of interests.

The many allusions to his interactions with the Neapolitan Royal Family and nobles from Britain and the Continent further aided Hamilton's desire for esteem amongst his readership. Notwithstanding his previous differences with the Comte de Buffon, Hamilton would have fully endorsed his underlying premise, namely:

> In the history of civilisations, we consult documents, examine medals and decipher ancient inscriptions to determine the sequence of human revolutions . . . so in natural history, we should delve into the archives of the earth [and] bring forth ancient monuments from its bowels.[351]

The thesis asserts that it is in the field of natural philosophy that Hamilton made major contributions to the furtherance of human knowledge. His research, firmly based on observation and experiment, went beyond any knowledge worker in the field of volcanology, universalism and 'deep time', until Hutton produced his own epic work in 1778. In contrast, Hamilton will be shown to be heavily dependent on others in the area for which he was most famed, namely vases and antiquities.

[351] V. Gardner-Coates and J. Seydl, *Antiquity Recovered: The Legacy of Pompeii and Herculaneum.* (J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, 2007), p. 31.

Chapter Three

Blending Time, Antiquity & Humanity

This chapter explores Hamilton's engagement with the extraordinary discoveries emerging from the Buried Cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii. Two themes are explored. After an assessment of the manner in which the Neapolitan monarchy used the discoveries to enhance their international standing, the manner in which Camillo Paderni and others informed the Royal Society in London of events in the Buried Cities are explored. The second section considers Hamilton in relation to those who acted as his mentors after his arrival in Naples and then revisits *Campi Phlegraei*, this time considering it in relation to Hamilton's ability to integrate geological time with human history and contemporary daily life.

The Neapolitan authorities used the discoveries to their own political ends. They used Herculaneum and Pompeii to create a myth regarding the Kingdom's origin. The Buried Cities became the basis for a foundation history of the new Kingdom. Greek and Roman antiquity, together with Vesuvius, merged to give the new state its own unique aetiology. Such a powerful narrative was important, as the new nation was neither rich nor secure at the time of its foundation in 1735:

> By jealously guarding the cities' objects and designs from European visitors, who were not allowed to sketch or make notes in the Museum, the Bourbon excavators were able to reserve the intellectual and diplomatic value of the finds, realised by carefully distributing publications, reproduction and fashionable gifts inspired by the discoveries to the heads of Europe . . . . This diplomatic value was in part offset by the ill-feeling of many European visitors. . . who felt themselves snubbed by the restrictions placed on their engagement with the discoveries.[352]

[352] Charlotte Roberts, 'Living with the Ancient Romans: Past and Present in Eighteenth-Century Encounters with Herculaneum and Pompeii', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 78, 1, Spring 2015, p. 69.

Hamilton dealt with King Charles Bourbon's (1716–1788) dissolute son, Ferdinand, (1751–1825), who succeeded him in 1759. The building of nationhood was a slow process for the new Kingdom. Its capital, Naples, was the third largest European city, already famed for its volcanic landscape and Elisabetta Farnese's (1692–1766) donation to King Charles of her immense art collection. His aim was to enhance Naples' grandeur by building immense new palaces, such as that at Portici, which initially housed the Farnese collection, later transferred to the larger Palace of Cappodimonte.

Vesuvius, in active mode, dominated the landscape. The discovery of the pristine remains of entire ancient towns, buried by the volcano, was a unique endowment for the new Kingdom, 'a conquest within the viscera of the earth itself'.[353] The volume of new and amazing art and antiquities, increasing daily, drew Grand Tourists from Rome to Naples. Importantly, it allowed two ancient Roman towns to be comprehended in a far less cluttered space than in Rome itself, a city whose buildings consisted of a tangle of antiquities built throughout the ages. Lord Palmerston (1673–1757) observed in 1746 that 'When one sees fine Corinthian columns on a narrow dirty street to ornament a pig sty. . . the effect of the scene is destroyed.'[354] King Charles, by inference at least, could show his Kingdom as containing an uncontaminated connection with the glories of a Roman past, contrasted with Rome's 'sensory overload' of antiquities. In comparison, the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily boasted a direct connection with ancient Rome.

[353] Gorden, A., 'Subverting the secret of Herculaneum' in Victoria Gardner-Coates and Jon Seydl, eds., *Antiquity Recovered: The Legacy of Pompeii and Herculaneum* (J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, 2007), p.38.
[354] Quoted in J. Black, *Italy and the Grand Tour* (Yale University Press, Yale 2003), p. 55.

Herculaneum and Pompeii were newly awakened from a 1700-year sleep. Yet it was not Naples, but Vesuvius, Campi Flegrei, and the Buried Cities that attracted Grand Tourists. Viscount Bollingbroke (1737–1787) described the city in a visit he made in 1753: 'My stay at Naples was not very long. The town is ugly but finely situated. The natural curiosities and some few inconsiderable remains of antiquity amused me for a few days.'[355] Peter Gunn wrote an interesting piece exploring time within the context of the population of Naples:

> It does appear curious that in Naples, to a degree perhaps not experienced in other cities, one has a peculiarly heightened awareness of the present moment, a sense of sensuous immediacy, the enveloping, luminous present, the here and now. It is to instants, vivid points of time that I am referring, not so much to duration; to the momentary present, apprehended in all its fullness, or to those echoes of such a present, visions of such other once present instants, now in the past.[356]

For the eighteenth-century Grand Tourist, Gunn's comment was particularly apt. High status ancient artwork, still in a relatively pristine condition, co-existed with carbonised objects used in the daily lives of the common people. Everyday objects broadened interest in the excavations, synchronising ancient and modern.

The Neapolitan monarchy visibly asserted their spurious connection with Herculaneum and Pompeii. *Figure 9.1* demonstrates an instance of the King using the antique to bolster his position by aligning himself with Marcus Nonius Balbus. This important Roman statesman had enjoyed a distinguished career. He was praetor, consul and proconsul of the provinces of Crete and Cyrene, and became a tribune in 32 BCE. Financially, he was exceedingly generous to Herculaneum, earning the gratitude of the population who erected a fine equestrian statue in his

[355] Egerton Papers. 1711. Folio 464.

[356] Peter Gunn, 'Some Thoughts on Time in Naples' in E. Chaney and N. Ritchie, (Eds.), *Writings in Honour of Sir Harold Acton on his Eightieth Birthday* (Florence, 1984), p. 124.

honour (*Figure 9.1*). King Charles sequestrated it, together with a statue found later of Balbus' son. They were removed to grace the entrance to the Royal Palace at Portici. This was in itself a potent symbol of the King's seeking to transfer the virtues of a famous Roman soldier, statesman and beneficiary to Naples's new monarch, King Charles .[357] It suited him well to be portrayed as a successor to such a man. If the statue itself was not a sufficient clue, Winckelmann, in his 1762 *Sendschreiben*, recorded that a Latin epigram, composed by Alessio Simmaco Mazzochi, directed visitors' attention to the vital role played by the Bourbon monarchs. Winckelmann recorded that it featured above the Museum entrance at Portici:

> HERCVLEAE EXVVIAS VRBIS TRAXISSE VESEVI / EX FAVCIBVS VNA VIDEN REGIA VIS POTVIT. ('See how royal authority alone is able to draw out from the abyss of Vesuvius those things of which the city of Herculaneum was once despoiled'). [358]

Ancient and modern are compressed in the epigram, to the benefit of the monarch and the unity of the new Kingdom.

The ancient antecedents of the Kingdom were broadened as excavations revealed a wealth of Greek artefacts and scrolls, offering a connection with an even more ancient classical culture, which contrasted with claims to the Etrurian ancestry favoured by states in Northern Italy. By chance and perspicacity, the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily had created a history and mystique out of all proportion to its economic assets.

Knowledge of the Buried Cities in London prior to 1764

The thesis asserts that Hamilton was a voracious reader. It is known that in the period after his appointment as Envoy, but before formally taking up the post, he

[357] Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique* (Yale University Press, Yale, 2010), p. 158.
[358] Carol Mattusch, *Johann Joachim Winckelmann: Letter and Report on the Discoveries at Herculaneum* (Getty Museum, Los Angeles, 2011), p. 32.

read avidly about the Kingdom and also deepened his knowledge of ancient art by reading Winckelmann's newly published *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*.[359] His prior interest in art and antiquity has been explored, and based on this information it is probable that he would have read the significant number of letters published in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* on the excavations and natural history of the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily. There are also the numerous learned footnotes in *Campi Phlegraei* which demonstrate the range of Hamilton's reading.

What can be verified was that Hamilton owned a considerable library. In 1808, Emma Hamilton commissioned Christies to auction his books, so breaking up a fine eighteenth-century library:

> When Sir William Hamilton's 'Very Choice and Extremely Valuable Library' was sold at Christie's in 1809, the catalogue listed an impressive collection of volumes on antiquities, history, art and science. The library contained the historical studies of Montfaucon, Caylus and Winckelmann, illustrated editions on antiquities and collections by Bartoli, Beger, Piranesi, Gori and Passeri, books on natural history, volcanoes and voyages, and scientific works on electricity and microscopy. The books in his library underscore Hamilton's intellectual passions, and they provided background and sources when he published his own collections [360]

In all 280 lots, some consisting of dozens of books, were sold for a total of £1050 (£100,000).[361] It demonstrates that Hamilton had significant literary resources to research antiquity and later events.

What follows is an analysis of Camillo Paderni's letters to the Royal Society. It is important in that it illustrates both the politics behind the excavations and the progress of them. In relation to Hamilton, the letters offered him a personal insight

[359] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, pp. 16–17.
[360] Francois Lissarrague and Marcia Reed, 'The Collector's Books', *Journal of the History of Collections,* 9, 2, 1997, p. 275.

into the extraordinary happenings in the Naples area prior to his appointment as Envoy. They may well have been a consideration in his wishing to obtain the post when it fell vacant. A related factor was the interest of the popular press in the excavations. Paderni wrote seven letters to the Royal Society, which were then published in their *Philosophical Transactions*. They concern the excavations of the Buried Cities and are of particular significance as Paderni became Director of the Herculaneum Museum, and the leading authority on the excavations. Furthermore, he was responsible for selecting antiquities for the Museum and the restoration of them. Because of these letters and the assistance he gave to visitors to Naples, Paderni was elected to the fellowship of the Royal Society in April 1755. He had trained in Rome, where he became friends with the British artist Alan Ramsey (1713–1784), and he visited London. Whilst there he discovered that the Neapolitan authorities were recruiting artists to record and restore the myriad artefacts daily emerging from Herculaneum, and he was duly appointed as an artist and restorer.

Paderni's first letter was published before the twenty-year-old was appointed by the Neapolitan authorities to work as an artist.[362] The later letters were written when Paderni had become an establishment figure, and in them he described the ongoing work. The title given by the Royal Society to Paderni's first letter, dated 1739, indicated that the importance of Herculaneum was not fully realised in Britain. It was titled *Extracts of Two Letters from Sigr. Camillo Paderni, Concerning Some Ancient Statues Found in a Subterraneous Town Near Naples.*[363] One letter

[362] Royal Society, *Philosophical Transactions.* Vol 41. (1739), pp. 452–461.
[363] Ibid., Vol. 41. (1739), pp. 452–461 and 484–489.

described the superb quality of the wall paintings, while the other commented on the nature of the excavations:

> As soon as I arrived in Naples, Sign Giuseppe met me and carried me to Portici. The first thing he shewed me was the Pictures they had dug out, as such as never seen in our days; and were you to see them, you would be surprised as much as I was; for you would see Paintings finished to the highest Pitch coloured to Perfection, and as fresh as if they had been done a Month ago [sic].[364]

> He tells me they enter into this place by a pit . . . and then dig their way under the bituminous matter. . . . When they meet with anything that seems valuable they pick it out and leave the rest. But I am afraid after they have searched, they throw the earth in again; by which means many curiosities may be lost not being understood by these labourers.[365]

The haphazard excavation techniques were noted by Horace Walpole, who had visited the theatre at Herculaneum in 1740 and wrote about it to his friend John West. Even at this early date the excavation techniques were criticised:

> There might certainly be collected great light from this reservoir of antiquities, if a man of learning had the inspection of it; if he directed the working and would make a journal of the discoveries. But I believe there is no judicious choice made of directors.[366]

Being part of Walpole's circle of friends, Hamilton must have been aware of criticism which, as will be seen, predisposed the Envoy to share J.J. Winckelmann's disapprobation of the excavation techniques.

At Herculaneum, where the solidified lava was difficult to cut away, the mining tunnels were charted, but not even the most rudimentary recording of find-spots was made. Prior to his appointment to the staff of the Museum, the young Paderni

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[364] Giuseppe Carnet was an experienced restorer of artefacts recovered from Herculaneum and Pompeii.

[365] Royal Society, *Philosophical. Transactions.* Vol. 41. (1739), p. 487.

[366] W. Lewis, ed., *Correspondence of Horace Walpole* (Newhaven, 1937–83), Vol.13, p 222. See also Melissa Calaresu, 'Looking for Virgil's Tomb: The End of the Grand Tour and the Cosmopolitan Ideal in Europe' in Jaś Elsner and Joan Pau Rubiés, *Voyages and Vision: Towards a Cultural History of Travel* (Reaktion Books, London, 1999).

despaired of the supervisors, claiming that 'Superintendents of the place are wholly ignorant of what they are about.' [367] After he became Director of the Royal Herculaneum Museum, his youthful criticisms rebounded on him, as can be tracked through his correspondence. Subsequent letters from Paderni, now an establishment figure, demonstrated an adulation for King Charles expressed, with typical eighteenth-century obsequiousness: [368]

> Fortune seconds his endeavours and makes him at this day one of the happiest virtuosi in Europe; and we may say that he hath no occasion to take pains to seek for good fortune, for she always attends him. [369]

> See how royal authority is seen to draw out of the abyss of Vesuvius those things of which the City of Pompeii was once despoiled.[370]

Charlotte Roberts views Paderni as a mediator between the two worlds of the enlightened traveller to Naples and the absolutist monarchical rule in the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily:

> The political message of the Bourbon court, which is exemplified but by no means limited to the works of Paderni, coloured all aspects of the excavations of Herculaneum and Pompeii throughout the eighteenth century. Often, the Bourbons' political aims are seen as being in direct and obvious conflict with those of European visitors, with the two groups drawing on radically different ideology and cultural vocabulary. Yet Paderni, who operated in both worlds, was able to mitigate this conflict by appropriating the cultural language used by European visitors to the ancient cities and, with just a few tweaks of application and emphasis, making it support a message of enlightened absolutism.[371]

Paderni's correspondence with the Royal Society kept readers abreast of major developments but, because he was Director, the letters frequently became

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[367] Ibid., p. 489.
[368] Christopher Parslow, *Rediscovering Antiquity: Karl Weber and the Excavation of Herculaneum, Pompeii and Stabiae* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2011), pp. 205 ff.
[369] Royal Society, *Philosophical. Transactions*, Vol. 49. (1755), p. 490.
[370] C. Roberts, 'Living with the Ancient Romans: Past and Present Encounters with Herculaneum and Pompeii', *Huntingdon Literary Quarterly*, 78, 1, Spring, 2015, p. 71.
[371] Ibid., p. 73

defensive. Thus, he asked for patience from the critics who claimed the work at Herculaneum was proceeding too slowly: 'Please reflect in what manner the persons employed are obliged to work through the subterraneous passages and how hard they find the lava and then you may judge why they advance so slow [sic].'[372] There are frequent references to discoveries of Greek language and art. An example is where he noted an inscription on a bust: ΑΠΟΛΛΟΙΟΣ ΑΡΧΙΟΥ ΑΘΗΝΙΟΣ (Apollonios son of Athenios).[373] Collectively, the findings strengthened a notion that there was much Greek cultural influence to be uncovered in the Buried Cities and their hinterland; this became even more pronounced when pristine vases of Magna Graecia and mainland Greece were discovered as Etruscan tombs were opened. In a letter dated July 1755, Paderni offered details about the state-sponsored opening of Etruscan tombs, which he supervised in person.[374] They all contained similar objects: cooking utensils, vases, lamps, personal ornaments which even included shrouds covering the deceased. Past and present merged as the smell of myrrh still lingered in one tomb.[375] Some were painted in a Greek style with scenes redolent of their cultural heritage. It will be shown that Hamilton was aware of them as, in person, he robbed one such, removing its contents.

Paderni modified his forthright descriptions of events in the Buried Cities in a letter sent to the Royal Society at a time when Fr. Antonio Piaggio (1713–1796) was working in earnest unravelling of the scrolls. Paderni wrote of the restriction placed on his correspondence. He had read some philosophical works contained in the scrolls, but added, 'I am not at liberty to be more explicit. When they are published,

[372] Royal Society. *Philosophical Transactions*, Vol. 49 (1755), p. 50.
[373] Ibid., Vol. 48 (1755), p. 821.
[374] Ibid., Vol. 49 (1750), pp. 501-504.
[375] Ibid., Vol. 49 (1755), p. 501.

they shall be immediately conveyed to you.'[376] The Director was at pains to demonstrate his obedience to the restrictive policies of his royal master.

It should be emphasised that Paderni was subjected to an impossible workload, curating the Herculaneum Museum while dealing with the sheer volume of artefacts removed and their repair. In fact, antiquities extracted were placed in piles for further sorting before finding a more permanent home. They were '(a) gratifying jumble of antiquities hoisted above ground, painted pots, brass buckets, ornate oil lamps and marble panels useful for paving floors'. [377] Conservation was a secondary consideration.

Paderni wrote of the many Greek scrolls found in the Villa of the Papyri, between 1752 and 1754. The recovery of this library initially caused enormous excitement in Enlightenment circles throughout Europe, replaced by disappointment once it became clear that these were 'only' philosophical texts, badly damaged and barely legible. Yet It was a remarkable discovery and Paderni gave it his full attention.

> I was buried on the spot more than twelve days, to carry off the volumes found there; many of which were so perished that it was impossible to move them. Those which I took away amounted to three hundred thirty-seven, all of them at present incapable of being opened.[378]

From Paderni's letters Hamilton would have been aware of the change in emphasis towards Pompeii and the consequent lessening interest in Stabiae and Herculaneum: 'In ancient Stabiae they go on digging; but it is long since anything of value hath been found. The same may be said of Herculaneum; for since the month of March, they have discovered nothing of value.'[379] Pompeii proved an easier

[376] See also, Ibid., Vol. 48 (1753–1754), pp. 71–73.
[377] Judith Harris, *Pompeii Awakened: A Story of Rediscovery* (I. B. Tauris, London, 2007), p. 36.
[378] Royal Society, *Philosophical Transactions*, Vol. 50. (1757–1758), p. 823.
[379] Ibid., Vol. 49 (1755), pp. 497–498.

target. The town had been covered in soft volcanic lapilli, easily removed. The speed at which significant finds were made became such that the backlog of material requiring authentication grew even longer.

Overall, Paderni's letters are a crucial source of primary evidence which demonstrate both the nature of discoveries at the Buried Cities and the evolution of the politics as well as the archaeological methods utilised. Other travellers to the area had letters published in the *Philosophical Transactions*. Their importance is less than those of Paderni, but they offer supporting evidence. One intriguing example, whose author was given as 'Blondeau', lists how the Portici Museum was organised and gives detailed information of the exhibits.[380] This dissemination of knowledge is shown in Network Diagram 4 which follows.

[380] Ibid., Vol. 46 (1749–1750). pp. 491–496.

Network Diagram 4. Paderni and the transmission of Knowledge of the Buried Cities to the Royal Society of London

6. The *Philosophical Transactions* were read in Naples & demonstrated that Paderni, now Director of the Royal Herculaneum Museum, shared news about both excavations and finds with the Royal Society.

7. Paderni's Letter in *Phil. Tans.*, Volume 48, (1754) implied that Paderni had been rebuked and could not reveal the translated content of a newly opened scroll to the Royal Society.

Paderni continued to correspond with the Royal Society

5. Paderni's Letters were published in the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions.* Their readership was Europe-wide. Hamilton would have read these Letters.

4. After Paderni became Director of the Royal Herculaneum Museum, he regularly corresponded with the Royal Society.

3. Secrecy regarding the excavations and recovered artefacts continued in Naples. The sole official publication was *L'Antichita di Ercolano Esposte.*

2 The young Paderni was deeply critical of the methodology employed in excavating Herculaneum *Phil. Trans* 1739. Vol 41. (1740).

1.The Neapolitan Government prohibited publication of information regarding the Buried Cities and restricted access to excavations.

Key

. Brown Box: London Based Events: Blue Box: Naples based events

This diagram demonstrates:
1. The secrecy of the Neapolitan authorities.
2. The manner by which Paderni changed from young radical to an establishment figure.
3.The way by which he spread knowledge of events in Naples to the Royal Society of London.
4. evidence of his being rebuked by his masters for revealing discoveries in the Villa of the Papyri.

It must not be assumed that events in Herculaneum and Pompeii were known only by a small group of savants. The press, both in London and in provincial newspapers, carried frequent references to events in Naples. The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century *Burney Collection of Newspapers* offers 211 references to Herculaneum and Pompeii between 1740 and 1764, the year of Hamilton's arrival in Naples.[381] The majority are advertisements for books and articles linked to the buried cities. The *Whitehall Evening Post* advertised in March 1747 a sixpenny pamphlet entitled *Letters of a Young Painter Abroad to his Friends*. It gave further details as 'In the course of these letters a particular account will be given of a subterranean town [Herculaneum].'[382] Clearly it was a success, as a later advertisement indicated that the letters became an illustrated leather-bound book, costing four shillings and six pence.[383] Classicists were active too. One account describes work at Herculaneum and linked it to the eruption of Vesuvius, quoting Pliny the Younger's famous letters.[384] The advertisements offered antiquities, genuine or faked, that were making their way to Britain. The *Daily Advertiser* recorded a scroll from Pompeii containing Theophrastus's Περι Φιλοτιμια ('Concerning Philotimia') being sold for £64.[385] Vases from Pompeii were also advertised for sale.[386] The Buried Cities even reached a concert hall in the Haymarket with an advertisement for music played on an instrument 'dug out at Herculaneum'.[387] The provinces were represented too. The *Cheshire Chronicle*

[381] They are housed in the British Library and can be found at: https://go.gale.com/ps/start.do?p=BBCN&u=lonlib (Acccessed 26 01 2020).
[381] *Whitehall Evening Post*, March 24, 1747.
[381] *General Evening Post*, September 12,'1747.
[382] *Whitehall Evening Post*, March 24, 1747.
[383] *General Evening Post*, September 12,'1747.
[384] *Penny London Post* July 18, 1748.
[385] *London Daily Advertiser*, December 28, 1751.
[386] Ibid., June 28, 1751.
[387] Ibid., December 28, 1751.

recorded a sinkhole at Herculaneum swallowing 15 labourers, who all died.[388] There are few references to Pompeii at this period, although they become more common in the years after Hamilton's arrival. Taken together, they demonstrate that Herculaneum was a phenomenon known to the middling sort in Britain as well as its elite. The evidence suggests that Hamilton's knowledge of events in Naples was as complete as could be possible short of living in the area.

The Neapolitan Royal Family's attitude to the antiquities puzzled and annoyed scholars and antiquarians who visited the Kingdom. The Monarchy insisted that they owned the sites and sequestrated excavated objects. The recovered artefacts were hoarded in Naples, to be seen only by those fortunate enough to be allowed to visit the Royal Herculaneum Museum. It was a deliberate policy to maximise political advantage from the discoveries.[389]

Although visitors were given limited access to the excavation sites, Paderni's letters to the Royal Society might be interpreted as a direct contradiction of King Charles's demands for secrecy. A plausible explanation is that either Charles tacitly agreed to them as a means of exciting interest, or Paderni's constant praise for his 'master' and his unwavering strong defence of the progress of the excavations endeared him to the King. Paderni must have recognised that the letters published in the *Philosophical Proceedings* would wing their way back to Naples.[390] His was, indeed, in a privileged position, giving him an unparalleled knowledge base. Judith Harris makes a fair statement when she assesses what Paderni saw as he viewed

[388] *Cheshire Advertiser*, January 11, 1757.
[389] Gardelli, Paolo, '*Actual problems in the theory and history of art'* in 'Stabiae and the Beginning of European Archaeology, from Looting to Science'.. St. Petersburg State University, 2018, pp. 209-216.
[390] The diagram ND.4 traces Paderni's letters to Britain and then back to Naples via the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society.

ancient wall paintings: 'Paderni became the first modern man in history to see life from the ancient world unfold and take him beyond the Gulf of Naples, beyond Rome to see the flooded Nile and villages in Africa where Pigmies cavorted.'[391]

Reactions to the excavations were mixed. An anonymous letter repeated Paderni's comments about haphazard excavation techniques and found the wall paintings disappointing: 'Much the greatest part of them are but a very few degrees better than you will see on an ale house wall. It is their antiquity alone that has recommended them to their admirers.'[392] One letter recorded the opinion developed by Hamilton in *Campi Phlegraei* some twenty years later. In it he noted that in his descent into the Herculaneum excavations he saw bands of 'good earth' between the layers of lava.[393] Even so, not all commentators were entranced by natural philosophy and archaeology. Ferdinand Galiani (1728-1787), an Italian economist, bemoaned that visitors 'Come to a City in which the government, national character and political system are the only curious objects worthy of a man's study and yet all they do is to go and see lumps of brick and marble at Pozzuoli and Portici'.[394] An exciting, although frustrating, discovery was that of the scrolls from the villa of the Papyri (See *Figure 9.*3). This ancient library continues to have great importance to both archaeologists and classicists. Exposure to the volcanic gas and ash meant the scrolls were carbonised, turned into charred cylindrical lumps. Initially some thought the scrolls were charcoal or logs. The carbonization of the scrolls effectively preserved them, though at the same time it

[391] Harris, *Pompeii* Awakened, p. 39.
[392]Royal Society, *Philosophical Transactions,* Vol. 47 (1751–1752), pp. 150–159.
[393] Ibid., Vol. 47 (1751–1752), p. 141.
[394] Anna Rao, 'Antiquarians and Politicians in Eighteenth Century Naples', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 19, 2007, p. 166.

made them extremely difficult to unroll. With the application of modern technology, some 250 years after Hamilton saw them, the reading of many of them is imminent.[395]

There were frequent destructive attempts to open the scrolls, sometimes cutting through them or softening the material with oil. All proved ineffective and many scrolls were destroyed. A more scientific approach was taken when Paderni commented that 'a monk from Rome' had been appointed to try and unroll the scrolls. The appointee was Father Antonio Piaggio, who invented a machine that, inch by inch, would open a scroll. Even in Piaggio's time it was clear that scrolls dealt with music, rhetoric, ethics, signs, virtues and vices, the good king, and defended the Epicurean standpoint against the Stoics. They have remained harder to decipher than most other surviving papyri and it has taken scholars up to two centuries to produce reliable texts of a few of them.[396] *Figure 9.3* shows an unopened scroll and Piaggio's machine which would, little by little, tease out its content. Pictured as a museum exhibit it is clinical, lacking the frisson of excitement felt by Paderni and those who first saw the scrolls very slowly reveal their content. Hamilton came to know Fr. Piaggio well and, as has been noted, later he became a friend and employee of Hamilton, actively engaged in his Vesuvian studies.[397]

In the context of the scrolls, a further example of Winckelmann's aggressive nature is shown. Piaggio's success nevertheless incurred the German's wrath. Winkelmann complained at the slow speed of deciphering them. Piaggio insisted on their

[395] Clifford Seth-Parker, Stephen Parsons, Jack Bandy, Christy Chapman, Frederik Coppens and William Brent Seales, 'From Invisibility to Readability: Recovering the Ink of Herculaneum' May 8, 2019 (Open Access) https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0215775 (Accessed 01 02 2019).
[396] R. Janco, 'The Herculaneum Library: Some Recent Developments', *Estudios Classicos,* 121, 2002.
[397] B. Parslow, *Rediscovering Antiquities* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2011), pp. 77–103.

sequential unravelling. Winckelmann wished for his personal priorities to take precedent:

> One would have preferred that they had seen the general context instead of finishing the unrolling and looked at the beginning of the text and waiting until they had found a few with useful contents and then pursued work on these but left the uninteresting ones.[398]

What he meant by this is unclear, for they formed a unique collection of Roman literature, together with a huge philosophical library, probably the personal library of Philodemus (c. 110–40 BCE).

Johann Joachim Winckelmann and William Hamilton

Before considering Winckelmann's acerbic comments about the excavations taking place, note should be taken of the approach to them approved by the Neapolitan authorities. In the first phase of excavation, wall paintings from the Buried Cities were ripped from newly uncovered walls to be added to the Royal collection. The excavations resulted in the emergence of a glut of decorated wall panels. Because of the royal monopoly on finds from antiquity, most of those duplicating restored panels or those of inferior quality were destroyed. Enlightenment scholars and visitors to Naples found it difficult to comprehend the mindset of the Bourbon monarchy

It has been mentioned that one of Paderni's tasks was to determine the fate of recovered antiquities.[399] Entire painted walls in Herculaneum were too large to be completely removed, resulting in vignettes being cut from them and, remote from their context, rearranged into pleasing panels. As such, Roman art was morphed into an eighteenth-century connoisseur's construct. As early as 1752 criticism of the non-preservation of wall paintings was prevalent. A Mr. Freeman reported to the Royal

[398] J. Winckelmann, *Letter on the Herculaneum Discoveries* (Dresden, 1762), p. 90.
[399] Paula Alconzo, 'Naples and the Tradition of Conservation: The Restoration of Wall Paintings from the Vesuvian Sites in the Eighteenth Century', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 19, 2, 2007, pp. 204–205.

Society that the excavators 'Made a passage round a wall in order to get the paintings off the wall. There have been several rooms opened from whence they take away paintings and mosaic floors. . . Labour is performed by slaves who work chained together two by two'.[400] Hamilton must have read this letter, but Winckelmann attacked the methods employed vigorously, writing that 'It is deplorable that those paintings which were not deemed valuable and were not appropriated by the Royal Museum were slashed and damaged by the express orders of the Court so that they would not fall into the hands of strangers.'[401] Making illegal the export of antiquities slowed previous 'treasure hunting' which had resulted in a mass of ancient artefacts finding their way to northern Europe. There was no thought in this early period of discovery that the *gestalt* of the uncovered cities was of greater significance than amassing the treasure they contained.

Hamilton was indebted to Winckelmann in many ways. During his journey to Naples, he read two works by the German scholar, who held the influential post of Prefect of Antiquities at the Vatican. The first was the ground-breaking *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (History of Ancient Art, 1764) , and the second was the *Sendschreiben von den Herculanischen Entdeckungen* (Letter on the Herculaneum Discoveries, 1762).[402] From them Hamilton gained the latest understanding of ancient art, together with a critique of the progress of the excavations and the restrictions placed on scholars by the Neapolitan monarchy. The *Sendschreiben* pleaded for a more systematic recording of artefacts, much as Paderni's youthful letter to the Royal

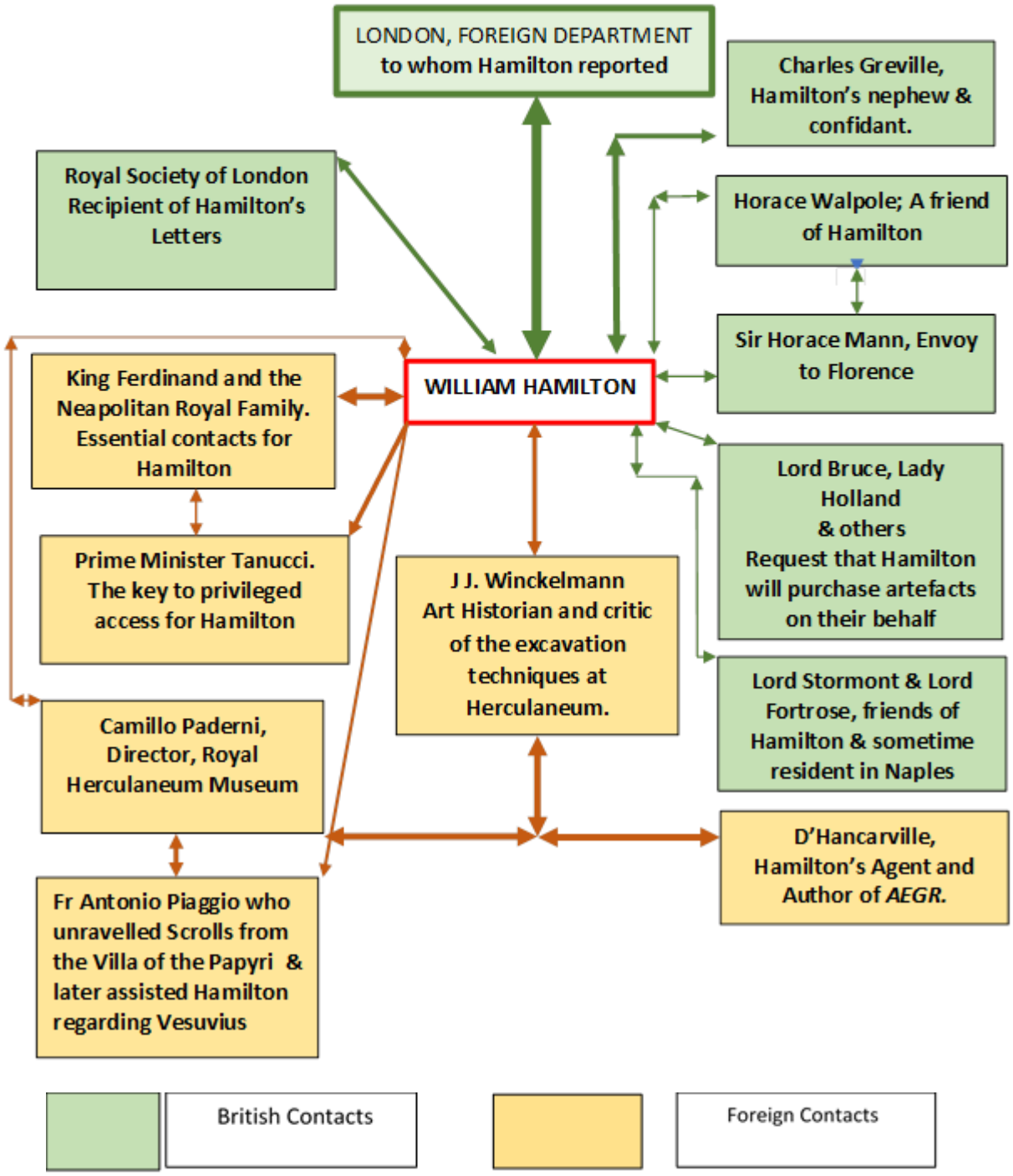
[400] Royal Society, *Philosophical Transactions*, Vol. 47. (1751–1752), p. 151.
[401] J. Winckelmann, *Report on the Latest Discoveries at Herculaneum.* (Dresden, 1764), p.32.
[402] J. Winckelmann, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (Dresden, 1764). D. Constantine, 'J.J. Winckelmann and Sir William Hamilton', *Oxford German Studies*, 22, 1, 1993, p. 57. Constantine reports that Hamilton was given a copy of the Sendschreiben in Paris while on his way to Naples.

Society had done. Winckelmann deemed the conservators 'careless, ignorant and stupid'.[403]

[403] Winckelmann, *Letter on the Herculaneum Discoveries*, p. 24. For a detailed account see C. Parslow, *Rediscovering Antiquity: Karl Weber and the Excavation of Herculaneum, Pompeii and Stabiae* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995), pp. 19–31; J. Winckelmann, J., *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (Dresden, 1764).

Network Diagram 5

Examples of Hamilton's Networks *circa 1768*



The diagram above demonstrates the wide networks employed by Hamilton in the course of his collecting and antiquarian studies. The Europe wide connectivity of his contacts is evident. The Appendix to the thesis where Morrison's letters are explored offers more detail concerning his networks.

His blistering attack on the chief supervisor, Roc Joaquin de Alcubierre (1702–1780), who had worked in the area since 1732, is well known: 'The man had as little to do with antiquities as the moon has to do with lobsters, and through his inexperience he was guilty of much damage and the loss of many beautiful things.'[404] For Winckelmann, Alcubierre's promotion, leading to the appointment of Karl Weber (1712–1764) as site director, was a great improvement. Winckelmann praised Weber as much as he reviled Alcubierre. In the *Nachrichten von den neuesten Herculanischen Entdeckungen* (1764) (Report on the Latest Discoveries at Herculaneum), Winkelmann opined that 'To this intelligent gentleman we all owe thanks for all the valuable work that has been carried out since.'[405] The praise was deserved, as Weber had made accurate ground plans of the buildings discovered and required find-spots to be noted. Alcubierre had been proud of the tunnels he dug through walls, mapping them well, emphasising his background as a mining engineer, but equally showing his ignorance as an archaeologist. With Weber's superintendence, tunnels were no longer driven through walls, but around them. Perhaps Weber's greatest triumph was the site plan he made during the excavation of the Villa of the Papyri, still used by scholars today.

Hamilton met Winckelmann soon after his arrival in Naples, having been introduced to him by Prince George von Mecklenburg-Strelitz, (1748–1785) brother of Queen Charlotte (1744–1818) of Britain. It was to their mutual advantage. To an extent, Hamilton, as a favoured envoy, could protect Winckelmann, and he give him

[404] *Letter on the Herculaneum Discoveries*, p. 19.
[405] Winckelmann, *Report on the Latest Discoveries at Herculaneum,* p. 11. See also Parslow, *Rediscovering Antiquity,* Chapter 3.

introductions to publishers in London, while, for his part, the German could help make Hamilton's knowledge 'state of the art'.

An unexpected consequence of the Neapolitan restrictions to the acquisition of artefacts was that, as there was no antiquarian trade in wall paintings, a market for forgers grew, with the consequence that their work proliferated in noble houses around Europe. Winckelmann wrote of Giuseppe Guerra (died 1761) that 'The [forgeries] were all made in Rome by a very mediocre Venetian painter Giuseppe Guerra who died last year.'[406] He mocked those who purchased faked paintings from antiquity, overstating his case by claiming that all those purchased and sent to northern Europe lacked authenticity. Winckelmann's hubris was spectacularly unmasked when his friend, the artist Anton Raphael Mengs (1728–1779), a German Bohemian painter active in Rome, told Winckelmann that the three paintings he had purchased from him as Roman were, in fact, Mengs's own work. By this time, they had already appeared in the *Kunst der Alterhums.* The friendship ended at this point.[407]

Winckelmann was himself criticised by Bernardo Galiani (1724–1774), a member of the Royal Herculaneum Academy, who had guided Winckelmann through the subterranean theatre at Herculaneum. Galiani did not think that the German had understood the many difficulties facing the workers, partly because he was a classicist, not an archaeologist. Winckelmann continued to pour scorn upon the Royal Herculaneum Academy. In a letter he wrote that '[The Academy] founded for the interpretation of the texts and other discoveries, is today a name without a meaning. They have not held a meeting for a long time, some members have died, others are

[406] Paola D'Alconzo, 'Naples and the Tradition of Conservation' *Journal of the History of Collections* 19, 2, 2007, p. 205; Winckelmann, *Letter on the Herculaneum Discoveries*, p. 73
[407] Thomas Pelzel, 'Winckelmann, Mengs and Casanova: A Reappraisal of a Famous Eighteenth-Century Forgery', *The Art Bulletin* 54, 3, September 1972, p. 300.

absent.'[408] Notwithstanding, The Royal Herculaneum Museum at Portici was the repository for the choicest artefacts recovered. With his inimical nerve and an abuse of Paderni's friendship which had allowed him privileged access to the site, Winckelmann proceeded to publish his own guide to it, pocket-sized, to aid visitors. His tone regarding the Museum was generally positive and his guidebook listed objects displayed gallery by gallery. Even so, he cut a Janus-like figure, referring to Paderni as 'a most astute and ignorant man'.[409]

The response of those permitted to view the galleries was mixed. An anonymous visitor wrote:

> The design of the greatest part of these paintings are so strange and uncouth, that it is difficult, and almost impossible to guess what was aimed at. A vast deal of it looks like such Chinese borders and ornaments, as we see painted upon screens. There are a great deal of little figures dancing upon ropes; some few bad landscapes; and some very odd pieces either emblematic, or perhaps the painter's whim [sic].[410]

In contrast, commenting on the same pieces, Winkelmann was ecstatic describing them as 'the work of a great master. They are as fleeting as a thought and as beautiful as if they had been drawn by the Graces.'[411] Although Winckelmann's scholarship was of a higher order than Hamilton's, there was a marked contrast between Winckelmann's fiery polemics and the gentle and subtle manner by which Hamilton interacted with the Royal Family.

As was noted earlier, the restriction of access to the archaeological sites and artefacts for most visitors was part of the political control of information concerning

[408] Winckelmann, *Report on the Latest Discoveries at Herculaneum*, p. 52.
[409] Harris, *Pompeii Reawakened*, p. 61.
[410] Royal Society, *Philosophical Trans*actions, Vol 47, (1751–52), p. 157. Anon., 'Extract of a Letter Concerning Herculaneum'. Carol Mattusch identified the paintings described in her *Johann Joachim Winckelmann: Letter and Report on the Discoveries at Herculaneum* (Getty Museum, Los Angeles, 2011), p.44, fn. 140.
[411] Ibid., p. 30.

antiquities.[412] Information about them might be gained through the official publication *Le antichità di ecolano esposte* (Antiquities of Herculaneum Exposed), published in eight volumes between 1757 and 1792, a work which contained both text and beautiful images from the excavated towns, as shown in *Figure 9.2*. Publication was controlled by the government-appointed Accademia Ercolanese, an academic body established to record major discoveries but firmly under the control of the Monarchy, with Prime Minister Tanucci as its Chair.[413] Yet access was restricted to a small elite, as *L' Antichità* print run was restricted and obtainable only as a royal gift. It is noteworthy that Hamilton possessed the work, a sure sign of royal favour. Because circulation was so restricted, a reaction was that clandestine drawings were made by visitors to the sites, some of which were later published abroad. Alden Gordon suggests premeditated infiltration to make drawing *in situ* by a French group and argues that they may have had assistance from within the excavation team.[414] Jerome Bellicard (1726–1786) and Charles Cochin (1715–1790) were in Naples during 1750-1751, working assiduously on a publication of the discoveries denied them by the Crown. Their work, *Observations upon the Antiquities of the Town of Herculaneum*, the first illustrated account of the discoveries to be written in English, was published in London in 1753. It is yet another source that Hamilton would have known.

Le antichità di ercolano esposte was intended to be the definitive catalogue of the ongoing excavations. Its text gave a broad background to the archaeological work continuing in the Buried Cities. Because of its rarity and the beautiful images within it, Hamilton was urged to obtain copies for his British correspondents. One example concerned Lord Bruce, who wrote to Hamilton seeking favours utterly beyond the

[412] Paola D'Alconzo, 'Facing Antiquity, Back and Forth, in Eighteenth-Century Naples', *Music in Art*, XL, 1–2, 2015.
[413] Winckelmann, *Letter and Report on the Findings at Herculaneum*, p. 46.
[414] Gardener-Coates and Seydl, *Antiquity Recovered,* p. 45.

scope of the Envoy's diplomatic duties. Bruce hoped to obtain three copies of *Le antichita* for himself and two friends. Seemingly, he thought it a work that could be purchased, rather than it being a rare honour for those to whom King Ferdinand deigned to present one. Lord Bruce wrote:

> I hope you will excuse my being once more troublesome about the Herculaneum work. [ie. *Le'antichita*] . . . I have received no more volumes than those you had the goodness to get us; we flattered ourselves that no more difficulties would have attended the completion of our sets, as we were on the original list, & have since been favour's with Sr James Gray's and your kind assistance on that occasion [sic].[415]

As *Figure 9.2* demonstrates, the images in *L'antichità* were beautiful, even if 'improved' from the original from which they were copied. As will be shown in the next chapter, there were striking similarities with *AEGR* both in presentation and in the text interspersed with attractive imagery.

The Connectedness of Hamilton's Work

This chapter has so far discussed the Buried Cities in relation to Neapolitan politics, Paderni's work, some detail on Herculaneum and Pompeii's excavation, the treatment afforded the scrolls from the Villa of the Papyri and the forthright criticisms made by J. J. Winckelmann. What follows focusses on William Hamilton and the role he played in Naples post 1764, as he sought to understand 'deep time' and human history, from classical times to the present.

Hamilton's appointment followed in the footsteps of previous British envoys in Naples who were collectors of antiquities. Sir James Gray, his predecessor, left Naples in 1763. While in post, Gray took a great interest in the archaeological discoveries. He was a member of the Society of Dilettanti. Hamilton followed a similar trajectory,

[415] Morrison, Letter 16, Lord Bruce to Hamilton, London, 18 03.1769.

friendship with Horace Walpole giving him an introduction to Sir Horace Mann (1706–1786), Hamilton's equivalent in Florence, who also shared his antiquarian interests. Diplomats from other countries were also collectors. The Frenchman Vivant Denon (1747–1825) was French Envoy to Naples and competed with Hamilton in the marketplace for ancient vases.[416] It is apparent that Hamilton should by no means be viewed as unusual in his collecting enthusiasms. Because King Ferdinand favoured him, the Envoy gained privileged access to restricted archaeological sites.

Commentators frequently misunderstand Hamilton's principal task as Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily, sometimes viewing the post almost as a sinecure.[417] Hancarville justified writing the text for *AEGR* because: 'Our readers without doubt will lose much by Mr Hamilton not having leisure from the occupations of his employment to publish himself [the vase collection].'[418] Even though Hancarville flattered, there is an essential truth in the comment. It must be remembered that Hamilton's diplomatic mission was to represent Britain in Southern Italy and implement policies formed in London. The importance of networking was crucial, as little could be accomplished without the consent of the Neapolitan Royal Family. Dealings with him would have included their shared interest in antiquity. As such, whatever Hamilton's private thoughts, he had no option but to accept Neapolitan customs; but through the goodwill he generated, he might subtly seek to modify them. Functioning as Envoy was his priority and those who perceive him as idle in this regard have not followed the evidence. It will be recalled that his first commission from the Foreign Department in London was to 'Get

[416] A section of the Louvre is named after him.
[417] Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton*, p. 40.
[418] P. Hancarville, *AEGR*, Vol. I, p. iv.

as exact description as possible of the domain of the King of Naples.'[419] It was an open invitation for Hamilton to explore the Kingdom, a task he set about with relish.

It is clear that there was widespread dismay at a deliberate policy of destroying Roman paintings, which was articulated by Winckelmann's attacks. At this point, although Hamilton might be regarded as Winckelmann's mentor, he may well have had some influence on the Neapolitan government's change in methodology through his quiet diplomacy. Tanucci had amended the protocols, which Hamilton recorded:

> The workmen. . . should not remove any inscription or paintings from the walls or fill up after they have searched so that travellers will have an opportunity of walking the streets and seeing the houses of this ancient city. [420]

It appears that Hamilton's status was such that he could obtain easily authorised access to the Herculaneum Museum. Charles Burney, when visiting Naples, was entertained by Hamilton, who showed Burney his sizable collection of Etruscan, Greek and Roman antiquities, and signed a request for him and his friend to be allowed to see the royal museum at Portici.[421]

Once excavations began in earnest at Pompeii, everyday objects – some intact, others brittle and carbonised – were emerging, together with the profane, political and salacious graffiti of social life. Such mundane artefacts, including those of a priapic nature, together with similar imagery and graffiti, further linked past and present.[422] Such varied artefacts provided a poignant link with ancient peoples, and their social

[419] National Archives, SP. 93/21/22.
[420] Egerton Ms. 2634, folio 93-94
[421] Ricardo Eichmann, Fang Jianjun and Christian Koch Lars, eds., 'Vesuvian Organology in Charles Burney's General History of Music', *Oriental Archeology* 27, 2012, p. 43.
[422] The priapic imagery in Vic Gatrell's *City of Laughter* demonstrate a delight of the erotic in eighteenth-century London, which, taken with the Pompeian graffiti and imagery, demonstrates a a continuity in enjoyment of the erotic.

significance required excavators to modify the previous treasure-hunting to include the preservation of the mundane. Charlotte Roberts observes that:

> Items of everyday use or consumption inspire feelings of sympathetic closeness when modern observers reflect on the fate of their original owners. This is only one of the ways, however, in which the accoutrements of everyday life seem to guarantee the proximity of present and past. The extraordinary preservation of objects, especially of obviously perishable substances such as food or wine, caught the imagination of foreign visitors. The apparent freshness of these materials, which were seemingly exempt from the usual processes of corruption and decay, invited visitors to think of the excavations as less an investigation into a society already dead and ossified than a reanimation of a community that for centuries had been preserved in a kind of stasis, removed from the influence of passing time.[423]

They were not 'treasure' but linked the lives of people ancient and modern in a new way. For Hamilton they were important as he probed both the story of the earth and human history. Chapter Two explored the significant discoveries that Hamilton made in the field of natural philosophy. In this section, aspects of *Campi Phlegraei* are further explored, with a focus on the Envoy and his understanding of the interaction of geological time and the chronology of human history.

When the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily was created, local patriotism came to the fore. As early as the sixteenth century, tourists were attracted to the area because of its antiquities and the active volcanic terrain.[424] There was a fear that the ancient ruins were temporary and might be engulfed in fire from above or beneath the earth at any moment. The first 'travelogue' was Benedetto di Falco's (fl. 1540) *Descrittione dei luoghi antichi di Napoli e del suo amenissimo distretto* (1549) (Description of the Ancient Sites of Naples and its Hinterland). In some respects, it was like *Campi Phlegraei*, although its chief focus was the ancient sites, with volcanic features being secondary.[425] Decades later Ferrante Loffredro offered *Le antichita di Pozzuoli et*

[423] Roberts, 'Living with the Ancient Romans', p. 64.
[424] S. Cocco, 'Natural Marvels and Ancient Ruins: Volcanism and the Recovery of Antiquity in Early Modern Naples' in Gardener-Coates Seydl, eds., p.16.
[425] Ibid., pp. 24–25.

Loughlin convincini (1572) (The Antiquities of Pozzuoli and Places Nearby). There were distinct similarities with Hamilton's methodology. Loffredo used all possible means to verify his text, commenting that 'Unless I am fooling myself, I worked in such a fashion as to shed all the true light possible on such obscurity.' [426]

The huge eruption of 1631, which left 4000 dead, led to another work which focussed minds on the recovery of antiquity. Giulio Braccini, who, like Hamilton, ventured onto Vesuvius, spent the day of the huge eruption in his house re-reading Pliny, but sent his servant onto the roof to make an estimate of the height of the pine-tree cloud. He declared himself a 'Pliny' for his observations.[427] He is also noteworthy for his compilation of all the eruptions of Vesuvius from ancient to modern times, used by Hamilton in *Campi Phlegraei*.[428] Giulio Capaccio, an authority on Campi Flegrei, authored the monumental guide *La vera antichita di Pozzuolo* (1652) *(*The True Antiquity of Pozzuoli*)*, which included an appendix on the 1631 eruption of Vesuvius. Once more, there is a parallel with Hamilton in that he emphasised that the violence of the eruption required historical reflection in collating human and natural history.[429]

Campi Phlegraei, with its emphasis on the natural philosophy of Naples and its hinterland, might encourage specialists in the field to explore its volcanic terrain. Herringman attempts, unconvincingly, to suggest *Campi Phlegraei* was also a travelogue. This cannot be so. Volume I was a chronological sequence of letters while Volume II, featuring Fabris's plates, is convincing as a graphic display of a variety of volcanic landscapes, but it is not a travel guide as the references in Volume II link Hamilton's letters with the illustrations. Some influence from Hancarville may be

[426] Hamilton mentions this work in *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. I, p. 56, footnote 'a'.
[427] G. Capaccio, *La versa antichita di Pozzuolo* (Naples, 1633).
[428] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol.1, p. 51.
[429] G. Capaccio, *La versa antichita di Pozzuolo.*

traced in *Campi Phlegraei*, via his previous publication of a travel guide to the area.[430] It comprised a series of engravings showing antiquities around the Bay of Naples for the benefit of Grand Tourists. Furthermore, Hamilton acknowledged his connection with the South Italian tradition by citing his extraordinarily wide reading of works by Italian authors from the Renaissance onward, which included those cited.

Hamilton's observations hinted at a vast, unknowable hinterland of time which Hamilton endeavoured to combine with what was known of human history. He traced events from the explosion of the Thera caldera, now estimated to have occurred in approximately 1700 BCE, to the Classical age and then through the Common Era to contemporary Naples. *Campi Phlegraei*'s primary purpose was as a work of natural philosophy, yet Hamilton linked human history with the immensity of time itself.

Peter Fabris's plates in Volume II require some analysis, for they broadened the scope of the work by the inclusion of scenes of everyday living. The effect was that in many of the plates the forces of nature were linked with human activity, showing rich and poor in their varied pursuits. Hamilton emphasised their veracity, stating that 'Mr Fabris completed this collection *under my eye and at my direction*, with the utmost fidelity, and with as much taste as exactness.'[431] To heighten a sense of realism, Hamilton and Fabris are frequently shown working side by side. Fabris sits sketching while Hamilton directs the work (*See Figure 11*). It proved to be a close collaboration, sometimes making it difficult to determine the relationship between naturalist and painter. Beyond doubt, Hamilton was dependent on Fabris for the artist's knowledge of the landscape.

[430] It is thought that only one copy survives. See Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*, p. 129.
[431] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. I, p. 5. Author's italics.

Hamilton was able to draw the readers' attention to his linking past and present in subtle fashions. In describing the location of Herculaneum, he wrote that:

> An elegant villa. . . and others on a line with it are on the high road between Portici and TORRE DEL GRECO. A little to the left is the Village of RESINA under which, at a depth of about 70 feet the ancient CITY OF HERCULANEUM lies buried [sic].[432]

The message he offered was that although the scene is now peaceful and bucolic, the reader should think of what was destroyed under Resina with 70 feet of lava suffocating it. The implication was that It could happen again at any time.

The manner in which Hamilton saw a unity between the present and human history is clear in this snippet from *Campi Phlegraei*:

> [From November 18th to the 28th March 1766] . . . the smoke increased and was mixed with ashes, and did great damage to the vineyards. . . A few days before the eruption I saw (what Pliny the Younger mentions having seen before the eruption of Vesuvius which proved fatal to his uncle), the black smoak take the form of a pine tree [sic].[433]

Hamilton was never a closet theorist, but frequently practical. Having witnessed the destruction caused by molten lava, he mused on how to minimise the damage caused by it. Using past records, he opined:

> I am convinced that it might be very practicable to divert the course of a lava as is practised with rivers. I was assured that it had been done with success during the great eruption of Etna in 1669. . . [Lava from this eruption] was directing its course towards the walls of Catania. . . when they prepared a channel for it around the walls of the town. . . A book I have since met with gives the same account of this curious operation. It is intitled [sic] *Relatione del nuovo incendio fatto da Mongibello 1669 Messina, Giuseppe Bogagni, 1670*.[434]

Furthermore, he used the event to hint at a close relationship with King Ferdinand, stating that if such an event were to occur near 'His Sicilian Majesty's Palace at Portici the hoard of antiquities stored within it might be endangered'. Thus, in one well-

[432] Ibid., Vol. II, notes to plate VII.
[433] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 15.
[434] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 19, footnote a. Footnotes occur frequently in Hamilton's writings and are employed to give further detail to the text. His fluidity in writing material for oral consumption would be lessened had he incorporated the notes them fully in the text.

chosen paragraph, Hamilton demonstrated a scheme to minimise damage from lava flows, his knowledge of Sicilian history, his scholarship in referring to a text in Italian from the previous century and concern for the fate of the growing collection of artefacts removed from the Buried Cities.

Hamilton's musings on what James Hutton termed 'deep time' were aligned with human history through references to classical authors and those of a later period. *Campi Phlegraei* frequently binds geological and human time into a continuum. The classical authors were of great significance to Hamilton, adding a patina of antiquity and enhancing the authenticity of *Campi Phlegraei*. He perceived volcanos as the ultimate cause of the region's fertility, continuing with the comment that 'All have been produced, and own their beauty and variety of their scenery to such a seeming destruction.'[435] Contrasting with the pleasure was the pain. Hamilton wrote that 'There are many examples of destruction. . . and the ruins of Herculaneum, Pompeii, Stabiae and Catania relate their sad catastrophes in the most pathetic terms' (*Figure 10.5*).[436] Hamilton brilliantly integrated past and present. By linking geological history, Roman culture and current human activity, the entire landscape became for Hamilton a historical unity.

Take for example his description of an area close to the Grotto del Carne:

> Close by was the Sudatorio di San Germanic, near the present Bagnios, which are but poor little hovels, there are the ruins of a magnificent ancient Bath. . . The noxious vapour having continued at the same constantly for so many ages (for Pliny mentions this Grotta).'[437]

Hamilton further described the Grotta of Pausilipo:

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[435] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 5.
[436] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 3.
[437] Ibid., Vol II, plate XXV. He then quotes, in Latin, Pliny, Book XI. C. 93 and Seneca, *Naturales quaestiones* Lib. vi. Ch. 28.

> It is a road cut through a mountain of the tender volcanic stone called Tufa leading from Naples to Puzzoli. About 2400 feet long, it is an ancient, and great Work mentioned in Strabo, Seneca and other old authors. . . In Father Paoli's book entitled *L'Antichita di* Puzzoli published in Naples in 1768. . . the spot on which are the remains of Virgil's tomb [is described].[438]

Emphasising his empirical methodology, Hamilton watched many actual excavations take place, making deductions from what he observed:

> Few of [the inhabitants of the Pompeii of CE 79] had dared to venture out of their houses; for in many of those which have been cleared skeletons have been found, some with gold rings, earrings and bracelets. I have been present at the discovery of several human skeletons myself and under a vaulted arch . . . I saw the bones of a man and a horse taken up.[439]

While offering evidence on the nature of tuff, he again demonstrated that he was present at excavations, so witnessing the past as it was received into the present:

> About two years ago I saw the head of an antique statue dug out of [tuff] within the theatre of Herculaneum. The impression of the face remains to this day in the tuff and might serve as a mould for a cast in plaster of Paris being as perfect as any mould I ever saw. [440]

By this statement, Hamilton was the unknowing precursor of future archaeological techniques, by noting how moulds might be made. However, it was not until 1863 that the archaeologist Giuseppe Fiorelli (1823–1896) discovered a method of pouring liquid plaster into cavities within tuff where the outlines of Pompeii's dead had decayed.

In 1769, Joseph Addison published an *Essay on Virgil's Georgics*, defined as 'Some part of the science of husbandry, put into a pleasing dress and set off with all the beauties and embellishments of poetry'.[441] The term 'georgic' derives from a single origin, namely Virgil's poetic work *The Georgics.* The genre it describes particularly

[438] Ibid., Vol. II, plate XVI, fn. 1.
[439] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 55.
[440] Ibid., Vol. I p. 59.
[441] Joseph Addison, *The Works of the Right Honourable Joseph Addison* (Birmingham, 1854), Vol.1, p. 155.

applies to the first two-thirds of the eighteenth century.[442] My use of 'georgic' is extended in this context to the images in Volume II of *Campi Phlegraei.* Many of the plates in Volume II of *Campi Phlegraei* contain bucolic scenes of seemingly happy groups adorning the landscape.[443] Such images add colour and vivacity to the underlying themes of seismic activity. Their effectiveness is further illustrated later, in comparison with the bleak emptiness of the illustrations in Hamilton's *The Discoveries of Pompeii communicated to the Society of Antiquaries in London* (1777), discussed below.

The nature of the illustrations in *Campi Phegraei* can be categorised.[444] All make geological events their focus, while most of the plates show some human activity. An exception is *Plate 31* (*Figure 10.5*), which demonstrated the loss of agricultural land as a lava-flow cut across it, at least hinting at the human misery the volcano left behind.[445] Many of the plates, while primarily illustrating a geological phenomenon, show humanity integrated with nature. The rich are in their carriages while the poor attend to the business of survival.[446] A common trope was the presence of two or three human figures divided by class. The tricorn hat and long coat contrasted with the breeches and shirt of the peasant (See *Figure 11.1*).[447] Industrial activity features in some scenes. *Campi Phlegraei, Plate 8*, shows labourers cutting slabs of lava which

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[442] For a full discussion see Kurt Heinzelman, 'Roman Georgic in the Georgian Age: A Theory of Romantic Genre', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language,* 33, 2, Summer 1991, pp. 182–214.
[443] For example, Claude-Joseph Vernet, *The Great Cascade at Tivoli* (Birmingham Museum of Art, 1750).
[444] The Plates referred to in the text are not exhaustive.
[445] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. II, plates 10 and 30. 'Plates' refers to those in *Campi Phlegraei,* Vol. II, while 'Figures' refers to illustrations in the thesis.
[445] Ibid., Vol. II, plates 4, 5 and 30.
[445] Ibid., Vol. II., plates 9, 13, 14 and 22.
[445] Ibid., Vol. II., plate 16.
[445] Ibid., Vol. II, plates 4, 5 and 30.
[445] Ibid., Vol. II, plates 9, 13, 14 and 22.
[446] Ibid., Vol. II, plates 4, 5 and 30.
[447] Ibid., Vol. II., plates 9, 13, 14 and 22.

will become a road surface.[448] The road entering the Grotta Pausilipo was paved in them, while a working man is shown driving a bullock cart along it. Thus, the deposits from lava flows of ages past are now revived to be used by contemporary humanity. Seascapes are common and frequently working boats are shown alongside the luxurious vessels of the wealthy (*Figure 7*).[449] Such depiction of the human condition in the images added interest in Fabris's plates, where rich and poor coexisted seemingly in conditions of social harmony.

The vividness added by the human images in *Campi Phlegraei* can be contrasted with Hamilton's other pictorial work, *The Discoveries at Pompeii communicated to the Society of Antiquaries of London* (1777). It was a work donated by Hamilton to the London Society of Antiquaries, publicising ongoing work in Naples and also demonstrating his knowledge and privileged position (See *Figure 8)*.[450] The Society had been formed in 1707 with the aim of 'The encouragement, advancement and furtherance of the study and knowledge of antiquities and history in this and other countries.'[451] Hamilton had been elected to the Fellowship of the Society of Antiquaries in 1772. It brings to the fore the issue of 'patron' and 'client'. In one sense, Hamilton is patron because he is donating detailed, desirable knowledge to the Society of Antiquarians; yet he is also a client because of his wish to be known and regarded in London as a scholar, which was reinforced by their granting him membership of their Society.

[448] Ibid., Vol. II, plate 16.
[449] Ibid., Vol. II, plates 32 and 33.
[450] William Hamilton, *The Discoveries at Pompeii communicated to the Society of Antiquaries of London* (London, 1777).
[451] It is the Society's statement of its purpose.

The Discoveries at Pompeii was a significant pictorial work which described Pompeii using accurate imagery, although in a cheap format. As with Royal Society papers, it was read aloud during an entire week in 1775 and later published in 1777. The work offered immense detail of the built environment of Pompeii. Each image was accompanied by extended notes, cross referenced by the insertion of small letters inscribed over principal points mentioned, similar to the methods used in *Campi Phlegraei*. An example is offered in *Figure 8*, a copy of Plate 1 of *The Discoveries at Pompeii*. Readers were advised that this was the principal entrance to Pompeii [A] and that there were seats of stone, including an inscribed one, removed to Portici [B]. Point [C] indicated where a bronze statue had been, with only fragments remaining. Hamilton supposed that the remainder had been melted down by peasants. Rather out of sequence, he gave the dimension of the roadway, 10 feet, 8 inches wide, with a pavement 3 feet wide and ancient track marks evident. At Point [D] Hamilton indicated that there was a small room where the bronze tripod with priapic faun was discovered. Although the entrance gate had been unearthed twenty-seven years previously, he commented that visitors had been allowed to use it for only the previous five years. Finally, he identified column fragments [E] and the spoil heaps beside the road [F]. There was no attempt to theorise, only to describe. It is best seen as Hamilton displaying his intimacy with Pompeii and a desire to show others the excavated town. Overall, the work is that of an accomplished archaeologist given privileged access to the site. It showed once again Hamilton's intimacy with the Royal Family, as the ban on independent publishing of the Buried Cities was still in force, although less stringently applied than earlier. By this time, Hamilton had gained an intimate knowledge of Pompeii and asserted his scholarly independence in *The Discoveries at Pompeii*. As a cheap work, it was accessible to a much wider audience. The contrast with the illustrations in *Campi Phlegraei* and Fabris's work in Volume II

could not be starker. The latter showed a colourful, living landscape, with humanity and nature interacting in a timeless fashion, accompanied with inciteful text. The *Discoveries at Pompeii*, by contrast, though factually accurate and informative, pictured the town as dead and lifeless. The text was read to the Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries between February 2 and February 9th 1775. Following the dry factual comments describing the scene shown on each plate were some more general comments from which, reading between the lines of *The Discoveries at Pompeii*, Page Six (which described Plate 3), Hamilton's real views might be inferred:

A. Uncleared rubbiſh. Over the pumice ſtones and aſhes is a ſtratum of good ſoil, on which vines grow, as they do over every uncleared part of the buried city.

B. B. B. Rooms, ſome of which were enriched with elegant paintings in Arabeſque compartments, that have been cut out, and depoſited in the Muſeum at Portici. Moſt of the floors are of teſſerated Moſaic; the beſt of which have been carried alſo to the Muſeum at Portici, and actually ſerve as floors of rooms in that Muſeum.

C. Little door, through which you deſcend a ſtair-caſe into the ſubterraneous room repreſented in Plate IV.

The images in this work offer a sharp contrast with Fabris' magnificent illustration in *Campi Phlegraei*, Plate 41 (*Figure 11.1*).[452] The quintessence of the excavation at Pompeii was brilliantly captured by Fabris in the remarkable image of the excavation of the Temple of Isis. Dedicated to the Egyptian goddess, it was found in an excellent state of preservation during the excavation of Pompeii in 1764. The preserved Pompeian temple is the second structure on the site. The original was damaged in the earlier severe earthquake of CE 62. With the image (*Figure 11.1*), Hamilton brought together many of the themes in *Campi Phlegraei*. The nature of the rapilli, soft and easily removed, contrasted with the dense volcanic material that buried Herculaneum. Destruction and resurrection met as the Isis Temple emerged. The pillars retained strong colouring with the marble cladding over the brick columns

[452] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. II, plate 41.

intact, which have long since disappeared (See *Figure 11.2*.) As in Roman times, it was the slaves who laboured through hard, demanding, unpaid and involuntary work. Fabris' image of the Temple is seen as if through a proscenium arch focussing the eye on three elements. The most obvious is the Temple itself, but the great volume of lapilli to be moved still blocks a total view of it. Its depth draws the eye upward to where a thin fertile layer sustained agriculture. Two types of actors appeared on the set. There were the conscript labourers, who, as ever, Fabris paints as looking fit and healthy. Their tools were buckets, spades and wheelbarrows. The principal actors are three gentlemen and, somewhat apart in the far right of the image, Fabris and Hamilton are in conversation. The brilliance of this plate is an exemplar for the empiricist, the geologist and the antiquarian, demonstrating how subjects, now studied separately, were unified by Hamilton.

It is clear that Hamilton's antiquarian and natural philosophic interests are linked. An added bonus was that *Campi Phegraei* gave him a status rare for younger sons of the minor nobility. Not only was he the highest-ranking British resident in South Italy, because of his role as Envoy, but his publications further advanced his status as a natural philosopher of note and as an intimate of King Ferdinand. There is no evidence that Hamilton considered himself an author before arriving in Naples, but his prior knowledge of the area, combined with the actuality of Campi Flegrei, galvanised a nascent intellectual into producing one of the most brilliant books of the eighteenth century, *Campi Phlegraei.* Alongside the practical, Hamilton probed the wisdom of the past. His writings were redolent with quotations from classical authors. They were used to testify to past incidents of volcanology and the remains of Etruscan and Greek culture. For him there was no difficulty in merging geological time with that of human history. To further this aim, he referenced Greek and Roman authors, together with other writers throughout the Common Era. Time, universality, forces of nature and

human existence were welded together. The modern commentator must seek them out, for Hamilton did not write in a concise and sequential manner. It was within individual paragraphs that his genius emerged. Great lava flows and the implicit vast tracts of geological time merged into recorded history, so forming a seamless entity.

Because *Campi Phlegraei* became so well-known there is a temptation to view its contents as Hamilton's personal discoveries, but, as was seen, it was not the case. Others had made similar observations prior to Hamilton reaching Naples, although these were explored in greater detail by him. His wide reading of previous works relating to antiquity and volcanology while in Naples, some of which he acknowledged in the footnotes to *Campi Phlegraei*, are further evidence that his work followed in the footsteps of others. Hamilton's originality lay in his use of the material. He remains unique in researching over three decades, deepening his knowledge and then drawing tentative conclusions from it. In particular, his view of the universality of natural events was not made by his predecessors. Thus, while his conclusions were rarely dogmatic and often tentative, they frequently clarified previous observations and expanded on them. *Campi Phlegraei* remains a mine of close observation which later scholars used to great advantage and continues to be a monument to a thoughtful person who made logical and significant advances in human understanding. It is also apparent that his arguments were those of the Enlightenment polymath integrating a range of topics that would, in twenty-first century scholarship, be treated as discrete. Hamilton suggested that behind all, there is a unity of time, and that the ultimate forces of nature are far greater than human endeavour.[453]

[453] Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*, pp. 92 and 93.

Chapter Four

Hamilton's Vase Collections and their Publication

The thesis now focusses on Hamilton's collections and their publication. It is worth reiterating that in his daily life all the strands of his activities were integrated, but separation of the various elements is necessary to produce an overall understanding of him. Noah Herringman assessed the difficulty well:

> D'Hancarville's and Hamilton's shared pursuit of 'most remote antiquity' marks the deep, predisiplinary affinity of earth history and archaeology. By using objects, both volcanic and ceramic, to push back the limits established by traditional chronology, these two ostensibly Neoclassical projects also precipitate the fragmentation of antiquity into historical, prehistoric and pre-human domains.[454]

In 1808 Aubin Louis Millin published the *Peintures de Vases Antiques vulgairement appelés etrusques* (Paintings of Ancient Vases commonly called Etruscan). In it he suggested two approaches to collections of ancient vases. The first was that early eighteenth-century collectors did so in order to own 'pleasant antiquities' from which they might make aesthetic judgements and evaluate them. Hamilton's early comment about vases in a letter to Lord Shaftesbury in 1765 exemplified this approach. He commented that 'They have a je ne scais quoi of Ellegance that the Moderns do not arrive at' [sic].[455] Millin perceived a far greater sophistication to vase scholarship towards the end of the eighteenth century. The vessels might be analysed to establish provenance, the areas where they were produced, production processes and their iconographical significance. In the process the belief that they were Etruscan shifted to certainty that most of the vases

[454] Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*. As explained in this chapter, Hancarville's commentary in *AEGR* is, in fact, a history of the origins of art itself.

[455] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 33.

originated in Greece or Greek colonies in the Italian peninsula. Millin used the Greek lettering on many vases as evidence. Hamilton's own understanding moved from aesthetic appreciation in *AEGR* to the more sophisticated understanding of the later eighteenth century. In fact, he was one of the drivers of this understanding, seen in the title of *CEAV*, and the introduction to it written by Hamilton himself.[456]

The previous chapters demonstrated the nature of Hamilton's understanding of the Neapolitan Caldera together with his integration of geological time and human history. The discourse now proceeds to explore the process by which Hamilton gained his collection of antiquities, particularly vases and the use he made of them. A number of complex issues around both the actual collection of vases and the publication of the four volumes of *Antiquités Etrusques, Grecques et Romains* (*AEGR*) are examined. The work is one of the most beautiful publications of the eighteenth century. The history of southern European illustrated folios is explored as essential background to understanding *AEGR* and explaining the strange relationship between Hamilton and its author, Pierre Francois Hugues, the self-styled 'Baron Hancarville'.

South Italian Antecedents

As discussed previously, Hamilton regularly consulted books of South Italian authors which gave him understanding of a culture far different from that of Britain. Concurrent with his exploration of natural philosophy, Hamilton became a noted collector of ancient vases. Within the English-speaking world, the nature of antiquities collection in the South Italian tradition has been too little researched, with only superficial discussion concerning the well-established tradition of vase collection in Italy. The catalogue to the 1993 British Museum exhibition of Hamilton's life and

[456] Maria Emilia Masci, 'A History of the Various Approaches to Vases from the End of the XVII Century until the Beginning of the XIX Century' in S. Schmidt and M. Steinhart, eds., *Beihefte zum Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum* (Munchen, 2014).

work, *Vases and Volcanoes*, devotes a chapter to his vase ensemble, unsurprising in that the Museum owns Hamilton's first collection. The book's title is a pleasing mnemonic, but it does not offer a systematic exploration of the phenomenon of ancient vase collections and publications prior to *AEGR*.

A study of folios of antiquities published before *AEGR* demonstrates clearly that *AEGR* is but one in a chain of publications on ancient art set firmly within a Mediterranean tradition. Even its title, *Antiquités étrusques, grecques et romaines*, mimics that of earlier works. To understand the background to the Hamilton vase collection and Hancarville's publication of it, the historiography of folio productions in the first half of the eighteenth century must be considered. Claire Lyons's opinion is that:

> Rather than pioneers in the vanguard, Hamilton and Winckelmann should be viewed instead as catalysts. To understand the context of late eighteenth-century collecting, when figured terracotta vessels were elevated to icons of classicism, one needs to account for modes of interpretation practised prior to the popularization of 'Grecian urns' on the Continent.[457]

In a later article she offers details of the many collections of antiquities which include ancient vases.[458]

An exemplary scholar, Dom Bernardo de Montfaucon (1655–1741) founded the study of Greek palaeography, while his achievement in producing the fifteen-volume work *L'Antiquité expliquée et representée en figures* was ground-breaking in that no previous author had undertaken such a wide and scholarly survey of the cultures of so many races in antiquity.[459] His work was broken into sections clearly demonstrating the width of his study, as its content page demonstrates:

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[457] Claire Lyons, 'Museo Mastrilli and the History of Collections in Naples 1700-1755', *Journal of the History of Collections* 1, 1992, p. 241.
[458] Claire Lyons, 'The Neapolitan Context'.
[459] Jakob Gronovius's (1645–1716) *Thesaurus Graecarum antiquitatum* (1692–1702) is a further multi-volume work which included Greek imagery.

***Première partie** : Le culte des Grecs et des Romains **Seconde partie** : La religion des Égyptiens, des Arabes, des Syriens, des Perses, des Scythes, des Germains, des Gaulois, des Espagnols, & des Carthaginois.*

Unlike Hancarville, Montfaucon had made extensive and scholarly observations of collections of antiquities and ancient texts both in France and Italy. His work had a Mediterranean-wide scope, a precursor to Hamilton's own concepts of universality discussed in Chapters Two and Three. Montfaucon wrote in a simple descriptive style which, although obscuring the depth of knowledge behind it, made his writing accessible. The extensive footnotes were of a different order, written in Latin and revealing his astounding knowledge of classical authors. His footnotes linked the vases he described with antiquity, quoting Tertullian and noting Herodotus's statement that the Etruscans were in origin a colony from Lydia in Asia Minor. With contemporary knowledge, it is apparent that the vases illustrated in Montfaucon's writings are South Italian in origin (See *Figure 14.1*).[460] Montfaucon deemed the vases to be *Hetrufques*, a statement unchallenged by his contemporaries.

The accompanying text indicated that Italian vase collections were common at the time of writing, so linking Hancarville to a well-established tradition. Montfaucon's commentary took note of the painting style and the limited palette employed in their decoration, using yellow, black and white slip to highlight figures and filling ornament, similar to Winckelmann's observations on the Hunt Vase, described below. Unlike many vase images in *AEGR*, Montfaucon's were not to scale, and were enlarged or reduced as seemed appropriate to him. *L'Antiquité expliquée et representée en figures* was well known within the Republic of Letters and was translated into English in 1724.[461] Taken as a part of the large canvas of the ancient world on which Montfaucon

[460] This statement is based on the writer's analysis from Montfaucon's own illustrations.
[461] In 1724 it was published in English under the title *Antiquity Explained and Represented in Diagrams*.

painted, the space devoted to the ceramics of Italy and Greece was necessarily small. Notwithstanding, the book brought vases to the attention of a wider public, which included Hamilton, Hancarville and Josiah Wedgwood. The work offered a high standard exemplar of scholarship for succeeding publications. Although the paper, print and engravings lacked the quality of well-funded editions, such *as Le Antichità di ercolano esposte* and *AEGR,* the use of black and red for title pages gave the publication its own vivacity. Montfaucon emerged as an empiricist, researching such primary evidence as he could find in monastic and aristocratic libraries.

Soon after, Anne Claude Philippe, Comte de Caylus (1692-1765), a French antiquarian and an early archaeologist revered amongst those in the Republic of Letters, published a further extensive work on the antiquities of Mediterranean cultures. Following military service from 1709 to 1714, he travelled as far as Greece and the Levant, also spending time in England. He was a considerable collector of antiquities, recognised by his membership of both the French *Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture* and the *Académie des Inscriptions*. Chief among his antiquarian works was the profusely illustrated *Recueil d'antiquités égyptiennes, étrusques, grecques, romaines et gauloises* (*Figure 14.2*).[462] Alongside Maufaucon's *L'Antiquité*, Caylus's work was extensively used by designers of the eighteenth century, including the Wedgwood Factory. The importance of his work was stressed by its rapid translation into English and German shortly after publication in French. Caylus was himself an excellent etcher and painter. The *Recueil* addressed the tastes and styles of Greece, Rome, Egypt and the Etruscans. Like Montfaucon's work, it depicted and described low- as well as high-status artefacts. He emphasised the unity of art throughout the Mediterranean and beyond, so prefiguring J.J. Winckelmann's vision.

[462] Anne-Claude Phillipe Caylus, *Recueil d'antiquités égyptiennes, étrusques, grecques, romaines et gauloises* 6 vols. (Paris, 1752–1755).

Caylus's work was much admired by Hancarville, who dedicated Volume IV of *AEGR* to him.[463] Montfaucon and Caylus helped establish a history of art that demanded Greece and Rome should be considered alongside all Mediterranean ancient cultures. Where they differed was the manner of organisation of their work. Caylus offered commentaries on the art of the cultures, of which his title beginning *Recueil* is the clue.[464] He used a mass of materials such as gems, sculpture, paintings, metalwork, and pottery as primary evidence. As a Pyrrhonist, he stressed the importance of first-hand observation from items that he himself owned or had examined. As he stated:

> Objects can explain particular practices, they clarify customs that are obscure or badly described by the authors, they bring the progress of the art to our attention and serve as models for those who cultivate them. But antiquarians have seldom seen them. Thus, they have regarded them only as the supplement too and the proof of history, or as isolated texts requiring elaborate commentary. [465]

Ian Jenkins asserts that Caylus used artefacts as a visual narrative to lead observers on an interconnected journey through ancient cultures.[466] Caylus gave no indication that some of the vases he ascribes to the 'Etrurian nation' might be Greek in origin (*See Figure 14.2*). Numerous Athenian Red and Black figure vases from the period 540–450 BCE have similar iconography. He accepted that there was a synchronistic element in the Etruscan use of Greek myth, but he did not engage with the possibility of mutual economic activity.

Many vase images ascribed by Caylus in his writings to the Etruscan world were the work of potters and painters in Magna Graecia, traded into Etruscan possession. Most of these were from the fourth century BCE onward and had been manufactured in

[463] M. Eppihimer, 'Caylus, Winckelmann, and the Art of "Persian" Gems', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 13, December 2015.
[464] *Recueil* may be translated as 'a literary compilation or collection'.
[465] Caylus, *Recueil*, Vol. I, pp. 1–2.
[466] Ian Jenkins, 'Ideas of Antiquity: Classical and other Civilisations in the Age of Enlightenment' in Kim Sloan, ed., *Enlightenment: Discovering the World in the Eighteenth Century*, (British Museum Press, London, 2003), p. 171.

Greek workshops in Southern Italy. Caylus described them as being commonly found in Etruscan tombs. Overall, his work was an advance of that of Montfaucon, the least adventurous of the two. Caylus had visited Naples in 1757 and there he had acquired some terracotta vases and secretly made drawings from them in preparation for the plates of *the Recueil d' antiquites.* His travels gave him a varied perspective on Mediterranean cultures, leading to a more universalist approach to them. However, unlike Montfaucon, he failed to attribute his illustrations fully, apart from spasmodic references such as to the library of the Abbé Galiani (1728-1787) and the 'Porcinari vase ensemble', later so important to Hamilton's collection. Both were mentioned in the introduction to *AEGR*, Volume III. Hancarville was indebted to Caylus, who broadened his knowledge and offered further information for his theories of the origins of ancient art. Winckelmann, too, read Caylus and noted his belief that climate affected character.[467] This was a key point in Winkelmann's musing on Greek art, which he regarded as the climax of achievement for all ancient culture.[468] Hancarville also used the universalist concept of art from an anthropological perspective, exploring the actual origins and causes of art in the text of *AEGR*. As far as William Hamilton was concerned, acquaintance with both Montfaucon's and Caylus's works provided some depth to his understanding of Mediterranean culture.[469] From Caylus in particular he learned of vases found near Naples, even though his immediate priority was to collect rather than analyse.

The politics behind the official publication of artefacts found during excavation in the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily, *Le antichità di ercolano esposte*, have been discussed in Chapter Three. The resulting volumes were delightfully illustrated (See *Figure 15*).

[467] The introduction to *Recueil d'antiquités* praised Greek artistic achievement and linked it to their apparent *joie de vivre.*
[468] J.J. Winkelmann, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (Dresden, 1764).
[469] Sir William Hamilton's library, sold in 1809, contained the works mentioned.

Even the title is misleading, in that antiquities other than from Herculaneum were included. Unlike Montfaucon and Caylus, as explored in Chapter Three, this was a quasi-political publication, a major aim of which was to glorify the Neapolitan monarchy. The first volume, published in 1757, was state sponsored with few cash limits, ensuring that it was the finest production in the South Italian tradition. Although only given to the King's favourites, cheaper copies showing plates from *Le antichità* were copied in London in 1773, and an abridged version of the book was published in 1789.[470] Hancarville, either seeking to ingratiate himself with the Neapolitan authorities, or to draw attention to the quality of *AEGR*, included two images from it.[471]

Mention has been made of the poor quality of etchings in the earlier works because their authors had no access to the funding lavished on this regal publication. Whereas the earlier works had been gathered through the lifelong labours of single individuals, *Le Antichità di ercolano esposte* was the product of an academic committee chaired by Prime Minister Bernardo Tanucci. It is no surprise that with this level of resourcing the work demonstrated a high level of scholarship for its time, with engravings far superior in quality to previous works. Aesthetics appeared to be the basis of classification, with the context of finds ignored. The content of Volume I of *Le Antichità*, preceding *AEGR* by a decade, was confined to wall paintings from the Buried Cities. Occasionally the artists indulged in 'improving' their given images or 'repairing' incomplete works (See *Figure 9.2*). Paintings were grouped by location, but rarely was information offered regarding date or find-spot. Most architectural images were extruded from the three-dimensional curved features of the originals. They proved highly popular with the European elite. As with the earlier publications, they were an enduring source of

[470] James Curl, *Georgian Architecture* (David & Charles, Newton Abbot, 1993), p. 73.
[471] Hancarville, *AEGR*, Vol. IV, pp. 6 and 7.

inspiration for designers and scholars. Overall, the publication was an effective advertisement for the glories of Naples, adding to its draw as a cultural destination of importance on the Grand Tour. *Le Antichità's* influence can still be viewed in West London, where Robert Adam painted figures copied from the section headed 'The Villa of Cicero' onto the ceiling of the Red Drawing Room at Syon House, Isleworth, between 1761 and 1762.

The previous exploration of early works surveying antiquity in the Mediterranean had a strong southern European focus. There is one British contribution of significant importance to Hamilton's understanding of Greece. In Athens ground-breaking work was undertaken by James Stuart (1713_1788) and Nicholas Revett (1720_1804), with their book *The Antiquities of Athens*, published in 1762, after five years hard and sometimes dangerous work in Athens and Corinth.[472] It is explored here because not only does it offer a detailed examination of Athenian architecture in an age before Greece was accessible to a wide public, but also because it was important in developing Neoclassical taste. There are associations with Hamilton. Sir James Gray, Hamilton's predecessor in Naples, acted as sponsor for the expedition to Athens, accepted by the Royal Society. Hamilton himself had a close relationship with Stuart, indicated by the latter sponsoring him for membership of The Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce founded in 1754. There are similarities with *Le Antichità* in that the provenance of the architecture was beyond dispute, while its publication was amply funded through the Society of Dilettantti. Yet, although the motivation for the publication was apolitical, it produced acerbic disputes and rivalries within the Republic of Letters.

[472] James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens Measured and Delineated by James Stuart F.R.S. and F.S.A. and Nicholas Revett, Painters and Architects* (London, 1762).

Stuart, who emerged from a financially poor background without funds, made his way to Rome where he studied its architecture, learned classical languages and painted. He maintained himself by acting as a cicerone, which is how he met the wealthy Nicholas Revett, whom Stuart escorted to Naples and then to Greece. Stuart continued the tradition of empirical observation, justifying his work on intellectual grounds.[473] Whereas he observed that there were legions of published works centered on ancient Rome, he emphasized that too few examples of ancient Greek architecture with a secure provenance had been published:

> We therefore resolved to examine [Athens] rather than any other; flattering ourselves, that the remains we might find there would excel in true taste and elegance everything hitherto published. . . We resolved that we would spare no expense or fatigue that might in any way contribute to the better execution of the task we had set ourselves. In particular we determined to avoid haste and system, those most dangerous enemies to accuracy and fidelity, for we had observed their bad effects on otherwise most excellent works of this kind.[474] We have carefully examined as low as to the foundation of every building that we have copied. . . and it was generally necessary to get a great quantity of earth and rubbish removed. [475]

Stuart's and Revett's objective is shown with a clarity absent in the other works considered. The illustrations focused on the Greek remains, but plates preceding architectural drawings were given further interest by the addition of people, dress and local scenery in the manner of enlightenment georgics discussed in Chapter Three (See *Figure 16*). Illustrations were followed by architectural drawings, engravings of remaining sculpture and extensive footnotes. The authors acknowledged previously published works, particularly those of Jacob Spon (1647–1685) and George Wheeler (1650–1723). Stuart and Revett returned to London in 1755.[476] There were more than

[473] See Jason Kelly, *The Society of Dilettanti* (Yale University Press Yale, 2009), p. 188, ff.
[474] The term 'system' implies the manoeuvring of facts to support a pre-existing theory. Hamilton argued fiercely against such practices in the introduction to *Campi Phlegraei.*
[475] Stuart and Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens*, p. 7. The reference to 'systems' is echoed in the Introduction to *Campi Phlegraei.*
[476] Jacob Spon, *Voyage d'Itaie, de Dalmatie, de Grece et du Levant* (Lyons, 1678).

five hundred subscribers to Stuart's and Revett's first volume and, although few of them were architects or builders, its impact was as a design sourcebook which helped fuel the Neoclassical revival in European architecture. Stuart's reputation was enhanced by his becoming a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1758. Through the financial support of The Society of Dilettanti the final publication resulted in a work containing high standards of print and illustration. Their precision influenced the detailed vase drawings of *AEGR*, as shown in *Figure 16.3.*

Stuart's and Revett's great rival, Julien David Le Roy (1724–1803), engaged in fierce intellectual argument. In 1758 Le Roy published *Les ruines des plus beaux monuments de la grèce*, theorising that less ornate buildings were older than those with many embellishments.[477] Stuart and Revett had been researching in ancient Athens since 1748, whereas Le Roy had an advantage in gaining access to ruined sites, as the relationship between France and the Ottoman Empire was positive. However, he spent only three months in Athens. Le Roy's studies, supported by Comte de Caylus and his art circle, recruited the finest engravers and architects to produce illustrations. Le Roy researched Greek monuments in a wide, universal cultural context, comparing them with Roman legacy, thus linking him to the tradition of Montfaucon and Caylus. Concurrently, he continued to argue that there were natural and cultural aspects of beauty, an approach at variance with Stuart and Revett's Pyrrhonism, although acceptable within the theories of Hancarville and J.J. Winckelmann. Le Roy rushed his work into print in 1758, seeking to forestall Stuart and Revett, but disappointing his readers by filling it with lesser monuments instead of the expected Parthenon. Stuart and Revett delayed their first volume until 1762, which gave them space to note the reaction to Le Roy's work and pinpoint its weaknesses and errors.

[477] J-D Le Roy, *Les ruines des plus beaux monuments de la grèce* (Paris, 1758).

Stuart and Revett's publication had a considerable influence on *AEGR*, especially by offering architectural illustrations with the most detailed measurements, a practice used to give detailed dimensions of vases in *AEGR* (See *Figure 16.2)*. Furthermore, Hamilton's friendship with the authors ensured that he would have pondered the implications of *The Antiquities of Athens.* The growing interest in vases and their publication made it essential that the artists and manufacturers whom Hamilton hoped would use *AEGR* practically, proved a further reason for giving exact vase measurements.

There was rivalry in Italy between Giovanni Battista Passeri (1694–1780), who published *Picturae etruscorum in vasculis* (1766), and Hancarville, the First Volume of *AEGR* being published in 1767. Passeri's work was a publication based solely on ancient vases (*Figure 17.1*). Hancarville's *AEGR* was published close on its heels, although he attempted to assert primacy in publication date. The two works share many similarities, as *Figure 17* demonstrates. Passeri was a noted archaeologist who held the post of Antiquary to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. *Picturae etruscorum in vasculis* is a magnificent catalogue of vases, although aimed at reasserting their Etruscan origins.[478] Winckelmann approved the publication, but hints at ancient Greek origins for the vases.

> Among the Campanian painted vessels, I also include here all the so-called Etruscan ones, because most were excavated in Campania, and at Nola in particular. The Etruscans certainly were the masters of Italy from the Alps to the straits of Sicily in the earliest times, as Livy reports; but we cannot for this reason call these vessels Etruscan (…). There are three vessels in the Mastrilli collection and one bowl in the royal museum at Naples bearing Greek writing (…). This also highlights with what little foundation we use the general name of Etruscan vessels, by which they have been known until now.[479]

[478] Giovanni Battist PasserI, *Picturae etruscorum in vasculis nunc primum in unum collectae* (1694-1780). Winckelmann praised *Picturae etruscorum* in the *Adprobationes* to the work, p. ix.
[479] Masci, 'A History of the Various Approaches to Vases', p. 24.

These finely illustrated volumes depicted vase specimens from forty collections throughout Italy and even beyond the Alps, reflecting Passeri's abiding belief in the superiority of Etruscan over Greek civilization. Some full-page images were heavily dependent on Piranesi's (1720–1788) style, equally true of the elaborate capitals in the text of *AEGR.* For the art historian, it is superior to *AEGR* in that the museums and collections from which the vases are taken were identified rather than remaining anonymous, as was the case for most of Hancarville's vase illustrations, many of which depicted only partial vases.

This short study of earlier and contemporary folios based on antiquities establishes beyond any doubt that Hancarville's work was set securely within a tradition established more than half a century before his publication. He knew the works and acknowledged them even using *Pictorae etruscorum* in Volume IV of *AEGR.* In terms of illustration its originality was to reset an original vase image into a different artwork based on the hope that it would assist the contemporary generation of designers and artists with exemplar material designed to be developed further. It is in the execution of the plates and their use of colour that *AEGR* excels other publications. Many appear as pictures ready for framing, rivalled only by Stuart and Revett's *The Antiquities of Athens* and the state-sponsored *Le Antichità di ercolano esposte*. In his early years in Naples, although Hamilton remained a largely passive figure, he was absorbing the content of the works discussed. Hamilton admired Stuart's and Revett's work, which may have led to an insistence that within *AEGR* the precise measurements of some vases were displayed, as shown in *Figure 16.2.*

Linked with vase collection and their display are two important Italian figures. Antonio Francesco Gori (1691–1757) was a founding member of a circle of antiquaries and connoisseurs in Florence, who helped establish the *Società Colombaria* in 1735.[480] Its aim was to foster 'Not only Tuscan Poetry and Eloquence, or one faculty only; but almost all the most distinguished and useful parts of human knowledge: in a word, it is what the Greeks called Encyclopedia'.[481]

Gori's other notable works included the earliest accessible description of the first discoveries at Herculaneum, in 1748. He was also an authority on the Greek vases being found in such quantities in Etruria that they were considered to be Etruscan. Within his copious correspondence, Gori devoted some space to ancient vases.[482] Alongside him the wealthy aristocrat Felice Mastrilli (1694–1755) linked scholarship with museology. His private museum contained a collection of over 400 vases, requiring its eventual transfer to the Palazzo di San Nicandro in Naples. Unique for its time, the collection consisted of a host of antiquities and natural objects displayed, not in an *ad hoc* fashion as in many cabinets of curiosities, but with specific groups of objects classified and housed together. Within it Mastrilli's vases were displayed as 'ancient figured ceramics'.[483] On his death the collection was dispersed, and in 1766 Hamilton was able to purchase 65 vases from it. No export license for the sale was given and initially the vases were sequestrated, but they were released to the Envoy when it was determined that the collection would remain in Naples. The Palazzo di

[480] Arnaldo Momigliano, 'Ancient History and the Antiquarian', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes,* 13, 3/4, 1950, pp. 285–315.
[481] Anton Gori, *Memorie di varia erudizione della Società Colombaria Fiorentina* (Florence, 1747), Vol. I, pp. XI–XII.
[482] Maria Masci, 'Items Selected from A.F. Gori's Archived Correspondence', *Documenti per la storia del collezionismo di vasi antichi nel XVIII secolo* (Naples, 2003).
[483] Lyons, 'Museo Mastrilli', p. 4.

San Nicandro became a semi-public museum. Winckelmann referred to it frequently.[484] Hamilton too, must have visited it. Mastrilli also proved himself a scholar with a voluminous correspondence within the Republic of Letters. An anonymous handwritten illustrated work in seventeen fascicles, the *Spiega de vasi antichi*, written about 1750, is almost certainly a commentary on his vase collection. Maria Masci has traced some vases described in it to several North European countries.[485] The British Museum is included via Hamilton's purchase of some of the finest of the collection, broken up after Mastrilli's death. He developed a close link between scholarly writing and vase collecting, a *modus operandi* that Hancarville was to follow.

Excavation of Etruscan tombs and discovery of the pristine vases within them ran in parallel with the international excitement generated by the haphazard discoveries from the Buried Cities in the Neapolitan hinterland during the decades preceding the accession of King Charles in 1735. William Hamilton was an exemplar of the enthusiasm generated by many who knew the Neapolitan area during this period. Hamilton's primary collection was of ancient vases, buying and selling them as expedient, a theme discussed in the next chapter. For this reason, the illustrations in *AEGR* focused on the mass of vases purchased by the Envoy.

Speculative excavations of the Buried Cities had continued since Roman times, their object being 'treasure', yet a by-product must have been the unearthing of a great many ceramic objects, not initially thought valuable. By the mid-eighteenth century, vases had established their place as highly desirable ancient artefacts, showing scenes

[484] J.J. Winckelmann, *The History of Ancient Art Among the Greeks*. Translated from the German by Henry Lodge (London, 1850), p. 261.

[485] M. E. Masci, 'The birth of ancient vase collecting in Naples in the early eighteenth century'. *Journal of the History of Collections,* 2007, Vol. 19 no. II, pp. 215–224.

from their creators' concepts of mythology and life, made even more important for the Pyrrhonist if there were inscriptions on them. With plunder and subsequent purchase so readily available, it is hardly surprising that antiquities outlets in Naples could fill their shelves (See *Figure 13*).

While the early publications of antiquities demonstrated contemporary scholarship, vase collections, from the Renaissance onward, had long been admired for their aesthetics. Ancient vases were occasionally included in aristocratic connections.[486] Lorenzo the Magnificent (1449–1492) owned some, while Lazzaro Vasari (1399–1468) made drawings from them.[487] In 1688 Cardinal Gualtierei (1660–1728) purchased the vase collections of Guisseppe Valletta (1636–1714) and provided Jacobus Tollius (1633–1696) with drawings from them. Significantly, one was a vase with a Greek inscription with its find-spot stated to be in Cuma, thus acknowledging the existence of potters with strong Greek connections in the area. By 1745 Sabastiano Paoli (1684–1751), in *De patera argentia* (The Siilver Bowl), asserted that the vases were Campanian rather than Etruscan, using as evidence the Greek inscriptions on them.[488] A contemporary of Hamilton's, Salvatore Blasi (1719–1814), scholar and antiquarian, proposed that vases found in Sicily were of Greek origin. Alessio Mazzocchi (1684–1771), at one time described by Italians as *Il Gran Mazzocchi,* but now largely forgotten, produced a commentary on Greek inscriptions on vases. In it some advance of the analysis of ancient ceramics can be discerned, with a movement towards a concept of Greek rather than Etruscan origins.[489] In a letter of 1746, Mastrilli wrote to Gori distinguishing vases by colour, an idea further developed by Paulo Paciaudi (1710–1785) in his correspondence with Caylus, who differentiated between potters

[486] Jenkins, 'Ideas of Antiquity', p 170.
[487] Lyons, 'Museo Mastrilli'.
[488] Ibid.
[489] Ceserani, *Italy's lost Greece*, pp. 49 and 50.

working at various sites, citing Capua, Calvi and Nola as having Etruscan tombs that contained ancient Greek and South Italian vases. Giuseppe Valletta (1636–1714) had a fine collection of vases, later sold to Pope Clement XII (1652–1740), who placed them as ornaments sitting astride the bookshelves in the Vatican's Galleria Clementina. Equally, all major museums in Naples acquired ancient vases. For example, they were to be found in the Biblioteca Basstorina, as well as the Biblioteca dei Santi Apostoli. [490] These examples were apart from the Neapolitan royal collections. There is a diplomatic link with Neapolitan envoys. William Hammond had made a significant collection during his time as Envoy to Naples (1721–1723), [491] and continued as Consul until 1743 when he returned to Britain with a significant collection of them.[492] It is possible that Hamilton saw them before his move to Naples. So readily available were they that by the time of Hamilton's arrival in Naples their presence in the drawing rooms of the Neapolitan rich became close to a social requirement. The quantity of ancient vases in circulation before Hamilton's arrival surprises. Giacomo Martorelli, in a letter to Gori in 1748, wrote that:

> You can have all the vases in Naples in the palaces of gentlemen and the houses of citizens, and also in peasant hovels, not to mention in the libraries of monks who appreciate them even less than kitchen pots. Your Grace cannot imagine what a pile of such vases there are in Calvi. They bestow them as gifts as if they were bitter oranges, and they end up in Naples buried in the rooms of music masters and litigators. I observe that in Naples, there is no manner of person of however common a station who does not have vases for decoration.[493]

[490] These were not public museums but they housed significant collections with their owners offering limited access.

[491] Alexander Echlin, 'Dynasty, Archaeology and Conservation. The Bourbon Rediscovery of Pompeii and Herculaneum in Eighteenth-century Naples', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 26, 2 2014, pp. 145–159. Some of Hammond's vases were illustrated in Passeri's *Picturae Etruscorum in Vasculis.*

[492] Masci, M 'Birth of Ancient Vase Collecting', p. 224, views Hammond as the link between Neapolitan antiquarianism and William Hamilton

[493] Giacomo Martorelli, in a letter to Gori, 1748. It is quoted in Lyons, C, 'The Neapolitan Context', *Journal of the History of Collections* Issue 9, no. 2, (1997) p. 233.

Export of them flourished. Local Italians showed concern at the large numbers of vases leaving Italy for Northern Europe. Father Paciaudi 1710–1785), an Italian antiquary writing to the Comte de Caylus from Rome in 1760, noted sadly that 'Je suis vraiment fache que ces diables d'Anglais emportent dans leur pays ces belles antiquites' (I'm really sad that these English devils take away to their country these beautiful antiquities).[494] There was an implication that the trade in vases should be restricted. By the time of Hamilton's arrival, Prime Minister Bernardo Tanucci had made a law to this effect. Hancarville indicates that it was enforced:

> [Hamilton's] love for the Arts shew the importance of the work which we publish, but they show still more how much gratitude is due to Mr Hamilton. His love for the Arts has magnified in his eyes the difficulty of carrying the vases safe to his own country, which more than any other consideration has determined him to allow his collection to be engraved at Naples.[495]

Clearly, Hamilton's knowledge of ancient vases predates his arrival in Naples, and it cannot be inferred that his fascination for them only developed after his arrival. It is at least possible that he had determined to collect them prior to his leaving Britain. Similarly, there was nothing unique in Hamilton collecting them. He was simply conforming to a local tradition, developed from the Renaissance onwards. Hamilton was an important agent in publicising their fascination and desirability in the middle years of the eighteenth century, achieved by the size and quality of his collection, together with the extensive publicity it received through his hospitality, gifts, correspondence and the publication of *AEGR*. Hancarville's contribution was that he followed the literary tradition of antiquities publications, with a scholarly and culturally diverse text, to which scant attention was paid by any readers in comparison to the

[494] A. Seneys, *Lettres de Paciaudi au Comte de Caylus* (Pans, 1802), p. 119. Letter xxvii January 23, 1760.
[495] Hancarville, *AEGR.,* Vol. I, p. 20.

vase illustrations in *AEGR.* There as will be seen, only two vases were analysed in detail, most probably by Winckelmann.

Hancarville developed the theme further. In *AEGR Vol. II Chapter 2* he headed a section with the title *When, where and by whom [*ancient vases*] were made*. His text quoted extensively from classical authors to place painted vases in Greek colonies in Campania and Apulia. He also demonstrated a clear interest in the classification of artefacts from antiquity. Following the illustrations in Stuart and Revet, *AEGR* included detailed technical drawings of various vases, showing them in cross-section with detailed measurement alongside the famed coloured plates (See *Figure 16.5*).

The origins of ancient vases became a contentious subject for debate as the eighteenth century progressed. Tuscan tradition insisted that the vases were Etruscan in origin. Two works demonstrate this. Thomas Dempster (1579–1625) was a Scottish refugee who gained the patronage of Grand Duke Cosimo II of Etruria (1590–1621), who commissioned him in 1723 to write a volume detailing Etruscan civilisation. Three years later Dempster handed the Duke a *magnum opus*, the manuscript of *De etruria regali libri septem* (Seven Books about Royal Etruria), written in Latin and was the first detailed study of every aspect of Etruscan civilisation. It was considered a brilliant work.[496] Anton Gori, assisted by the artist Giovani Battista Passeri, published the lavishly illustrated, three volume *Picturae etruscorum in vasculis,* discussed above, which rigorously asserted Etruscan provenance for the vases a year before the

[496] Thomas Dempster, *De Etruria Regali Libri Septem* (Florence, 1723).

publication of *AEGR*.[497] Some of the 'Tuscan School' went as far as asserting that the Greeks had copied architectural forms from the Etruscans.[498]

Passeri offered a direct if simplistic reason:

> I cannot understand why we should deprive them of their Etruscan name. In fact, Campania, and especially Capua, where most of these vases have been discovered, were colonies of the Etruscans . . . Thus, there is no reason for debate: we should not be concerned whether the vases were Campanian or Tuscan, because we certainly know that the Campanians formed part of the Tuscan nation.[499]

Although the Tuscan school of thought dominated until mid-century, there was never a total acceptance of the Etruscan origin of the vases.[500] In the decade 1750–1760, Caylus amassed sufficient evidence to assert that Greek culture was the creative spur for many of the vases he analysed. He viewed Greek art as superior to that of the Etruscans, for instance describing an owl cup as having indisputable Greek iconography, comparing it with a Greek silver drachma with its famous owl icon as evidence. Caylus gave an illustration of an owl skyphos (*Figure 14.2*). He even used the Greek term *gymnasiarch*, apologising because there was no Etruscan equivalent term.[501] While he acknowledged that there was cultural intercourse between Greek and Etruscan potters, whom he saw as imitators and not copyists, he failed to make the scholastic leap to assert Greek authorship for the vases.[502] James Byers, a Scottish antiquities dealer, visiting Sicily in 1766, was perspicacious in his conclusions about

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[497] Ibid. See Maria Masci, *Picturae etruscorum in vasculis. La raccolta Vaticana e il collezionismo di vasi antichi nel primo Settecento, Musei Vaticani, Museo Gregoriano Etrusco.* (Rome, 2008).

[497] Published between 1765 and 1767. Hancarville used illustrations from it in the later volumes of *AEGR*.

[498] The temples at Paestum were seen by some as an original Etruscan concept, then copied by Greek architects.

[499] Passeri, *Pictuae etruscorum in vasculis,* p. 8.

[500] See Masci, 'Birth of Ancient Vase Collecting', pp 215–224. Evidence for the existence of vases in collections came mostly from contemporary catalogues and inventories.

[501] The trainer at a gymnasium.

[502] Lucilla Burn, 'Sir William Hamilton and the Greekness of Greek vases', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 9, 2, 1997, p. 241.

vase origins. He noted of the Prince of Biscari's 'Etrurian' vase collection that the vases were:

> Found at Camarina, some with Etruscan, some with Egyptian and some with Greek figures on them, and with Greek and Etruscan inscriptions, which I think shows that these nations had great communication together and borrowed their arts from one another. [503]

Hancarville postulated that many vases were fabricated by Greek potters in South Italy. In *AEGR Vol. II Chapter 2* there is a section headed *When, where and by whom* [ancient vases] *were made*. His text quoted extensively from classical authors placing painted vases to Greek colonies in Campania and Apulia. He also demonstrated a clear interest in the classification of artefacts from antiquity. Following the illustrations in Stuart and Revett, *AEGR* included detailed technical drawings of various vases, showing them in cross-section with detailed measurement alongside the famed coloured plates (See *Figure 16.5*).

Byers account was written contemporaneously with the composition of *AEGR*. Alessio Mazzocchi argued persuasively in favour of Greek origins, an assertion given more weight by Winckelmann, who supported the Greek interpretation for ancient vases: 'Nola was a colony of the Greek and a large part of the [vases] known to us are painted with Greek drawings and a few have Greek letters on them. . . It is distinctly shown that they proceeded from Greek artists.'[504]. Winckelmann continued his argument over a further two sides of print, presenting an unassailable case for most of the vases being of Greek or Southern Italian origin. It seems likely that Hancarville doubted the Etruscan origin of all the vases but it was simpler for him to continue to refer to them as such. Yet in *AEGR* Volume II he stated that to date no painted vase of

[503] Ibid., p. 245.
[504] J.J. Winckelmann, *History of Ancient Art*, p. 261.

Etruscan origin had been discovered.[505] It was a period of debate into origins. Between 1791 and 1795, Hamilton published his second vase collection, entitled *Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases of Greek Workmanship*, emphasising Grecian origins without equivocation.

The Birth, Publication and Influence of Hamilton's Vase Collections

Hamilton's biographers are vague regarding AEGR's birth and there is little engagement with the issue of how the project to publish it emerged. Fothergill glosses over it, simply stating that 'Hamilton brought out four sumptuous volumes illustrating his collection'.[506] David Constantine lists the prevalence of vases in the Naples area.[507] Ian Jenkins and Kim Sloan focus on *AEGR* rather than how the collection was formed.[508] Noah Herringman, in his *Sciences of Antiquity*, has broken new ground by giving by far the deepest analysis of both *Campi Phegraei* and *AEGR*. [509]

The first section of this chapter demonstrated the maelstrom of conflicting ideas and ideology into which Hamilton entered in 1763. It has been shown that his own understanding of the Buried Cities was that of a knowledgeable amateur. Yet within eighteen months of taking his post, not only was he the owner of a renowned ancient vase collection, but he had employed Pierre Francois Hugues D' Hancarville to publish the vase collection and write a *catalogue raisonné* of it. After monumental personal and publishing difficulties, the four volumes of *Antiquites etrusques, grecques et romaines* were published between 1766 and 1777, the first two volumes being partially bilingual in French and English, but with the later volumes in French. In

[505] Hancarville, *AEGR*, Vol. II, pp. 134–136.
[506] Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton,* p. 62.
[507] Constantine *Fields of Fire*, pp. 32 and 33.
[508] Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes*.
[509] Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*.

modern times it is Hamilton whose name is chiefly associated with this work but as will be seen, he can best be described as patron, but certainly not author. Hamilton was enchanted by the many ancient vases surrounding him. He was explicit in a letter to Lord Palmerston, commenting that 'There is a taste and elegance in their shapes & tho' the figures are not always correct yet there is a choise in the attitudes & a *je ne sçais quoi* of Ellegance that the moderns do not arrive at [sic].'[510]

How the garrulous Hancarville met with the somewhat naïve Hamilton is unknown, but they may have been introduced through J.J. Winckelmann. Hancarville's previous history should have been sufficient to alert the Envoy that he was dealing with a devious character. The appendage 'Baron' was self-styled, as his parents were bankrupt cloth merchants. He had been imprisoned for debt in 1750. Winckelmann warned a gem collector that 'When you show him [Hancarville] your gems keep a close lookout for what he is doing with his hands.'[511] This chequered career was aided by his considerable charm and power of speech. Isabella Albrizzi, at her salon in Paris late in the eighteenth century, reported that 'His penetrating , voracious eyes, his flaming nostrils, his lips which barely touch each other are the outward signs of his longing to see everything. . . he wins you over with his learning and his imaginative way of speaking.'[512] Such was the man who was entrusted with the task of assisting Hamilton to amass, at great speed, his first vase collection, and then publish it. The discourse leads to the issue of why Hamilton set about collecting vases with such vigour. Previously the widespread use and popularity of ancient vessels in the Naples area was discussed. Herringman reported that shortly after Hamilton's arrival the two men visited the Temple of Paestum, which required overnight camping. It seems logical to

[510] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 33.
[511] Francis Haskell, 'Adventurer and Art Historian, the Baron D' Hancarville', *Country Life*, April 1987, p. 100.
[512] Ibid.

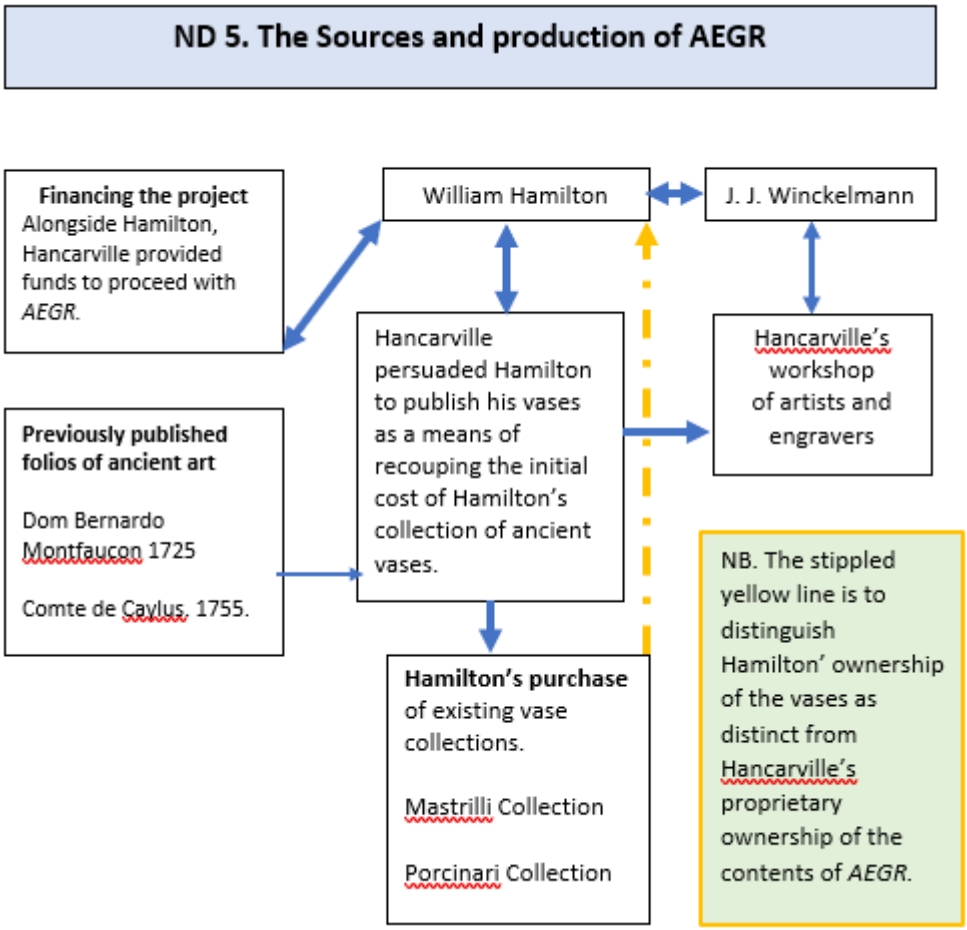
suggest that the smooth-talking Hancarville may not only have heightened Hamilton's interest in vases, but also may have stressed that the ownership and publication of high-quality vases in an elaborate print edition would pay for both the vases and their publication.

It would also give Hamilton personal esteem. Hancarville, with his many contacts, might act as both his agent and publisher. The 'Baron' perceived further advantages. Hamilton saw himself as patron, but in the text of *AEGR* Hancarville implied an equality with his patron. Furthermore, as both author and publisher, he would have close contact with the aristocratic Hamilton and his circle, and in the process find a way to produce, in the highest quality, his own work on the origins of ancient art. The time scale verifies that the two men were working in concert. Hamilton reached Naples in November 1764, and within months was amassing a huge vase collection. Hancarville began the process of *AEGR*'s publication in 1765, with the first volume published in 1766/77. From such a short time scale the purchase of the vases and *AEGR* can only be viewed as a unified project, a probability overlooked by many modern scholars. Network Diagram 6, which follows, illustrates the sources from which the first vase collections were formed.

It was all to Hancarville's advantage. Doubtless he would profit financially as Hamilton's agent, but from an early date he gained information, perhaps by a slip of Hamilton's tongue, that the Envoy was in debt for £6000 (£1,000,000). This gave Hancarville further leverage over the Envoy, who would not have wished such knowledge to be known in society at large.[513] It seems that Hancarville, already an experienced publisher, lied about the projected profit from the publication of the vase

[513] Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*, p. 132.

collection. In 1767, when Hancarville's funds were running low, he reminded Hamilton that the work in progress was 'a certain means toward paying his debt'.[514] Yet he



The publication of *AEGR* was a joint venture between Hamilton and Hancarville. The latter persuaded Hamilton, quite unreasonably, that the Envoy could recoup his considerable financial outlay on the purchase of the vases by publishing them in a lavish edition in the South Italian tradition. Using Hamilton's financial resources together with some of his own, the extravagant publication was begun. Of note is the manner in which Hancarville established a factory of skilled artists and engravers whose intense activity allowed the first two volumes of *AEGR* to be published in two years. Before his murder, J.J. Winkelman was an important consultant.
NB.The width of arrows indicates the strength of ties between the actors

knew full well that copper plate engravings of the period would allow a maximum print run of 500. Hancarville's estimate was that 4,500 copies would be sold which, if true,

[514] Ibid., p. 132.

would necessitate the engraving of nine further sets of plates, which financially would have proved ruinous. Any profit would fall far short of Hamilton's outlay in purchasing the Porcinari and other vases. Alongside these purchases Hamilton bought Giovanni, Duke Carafa Noia's (1715–1768) large collection of intaglios. In addition, there was the initial financial advance of £441 (£80,000) made by Hamilton towards the initial publication costs of *AEGR*. Hancarville justified the deceit, claiming that '[Considering] his taste for antiquity [and] the situation of his fortune therefore, he [Hancarville] may be pardoned for being the author of four volumes in folio.'[515] The work would have begun late in 1765.

Furthermore, once Hamilton's money had been transferred to Hancarville, his control of both publication and content was limited. His defenders might claim that the aristocrat assumed that Hancarville would do his bidding, yet he was unwilling to take a business role and used his guile to produce a work far from his patron's original intentions. Both William and Catherine Hamilton were apparently consulted about the expansion of the work to three volumes, and Hancarville regretted not taking Catherine's advice to finish the production in London.[516]

As a consequence of Hamilton's financial input, *AEGR* was printed and illustrated to the highest standards of the time, using the best quality paper, the finest engravers and even a bespoke typeface purchased from Venice. As a result, it broke new ground in the use of colour. Perhaps Hancarville imagined that in terms of its beauty it might rival *Le Antichità di Ercolano Esposte,* with the accompanying text equalling the genius of Winckelmann's *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (The History of Ancient Art), which became the seminal work on the subject.

[515] Ibid., p. 128.
[516] Ibid., p. 128, fn. 6.

Hamilton and his household were now living in splendour in the Palazzo Sessa and the Envoy's financial difficulties would not have been noted by a visitor. An examination of *Figures 1 & 2* illustrates the aristocratic atmosphere of his lifestyle. Samuel Sharp recorded that:

> Mr Hamilton, the Envoy receives company every evening. It is the custom to meet at his house. Some form themselves into small parties of conversation and, as members of this society are often ambassadors, nuncios, Monsignoris, Envoys, Residents or the fine quality of Naples, you will conceive it to be instructive as well as honourable.[517]

Doubtless the rich classical setting in the Palazzo, adorned with both ancient vases and fine art, added to the cultured setting of what was effectively the British Embassy. Nevertheless, the worrying undercurrent of the Envoy's debts was never absent.

Despite the praise given to *AEGR,* it was not a revolutionary work. It has been shown that fifty years of research and publication by other scholars preceded it, producing works of brilliance, even if not as perfectly presented as *AEGR (*See *ND6*). Hancarville acknowledged them, indicating that they were important steps on the road to a greater understanding. In deferential and expedient terms, Hancarville lauds the publication of the first volumes of the Royal publication, *Le Antichità di ercolano esposte*: 'We shall take the objects of our citations from that part of the collection only which is already engraved, published, and made known to the world by the munificence of his Sicilian Majesty.'[518] It proved to be yet another statement from Hancarville that was not honoured in reality.

AEGR had absorbed the previous published works on antiquity to the extent that even the British Athenian explorers Stuart and Revett have honourable mention.[519] Hamilton was enthusiastic that his collection should be known as widely as possible.

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[517] Sharp, *Letters from Italy*, letter xviii, p. 76.
[518] Hancarville, *AEGR,* Vol. I, p. x.
[519] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 158.

Perhaps these lines from Volume I were penned by him, for they certainly reflect his views: 'Collections lose the greatest part of their merit remaining buried in Cabinets and become rather monuments of the luxury of the possessor, than of utility to the progress of the Arts.'[520] While acknowledging the works of those before him, and in particular Caylus, Hancarville felt there was much more to explain:

> We believe it will be readily acknowledged that it is not sufficient to have a general idea of the vases of the Ancients, as they are given us in the Books of the Count de Caylus and Father Montfaucon. These works at the utmost only shew what members the Ancients employed in the composition of their vases, but do not indicate their relative proportion, and one should succeed ill in copying them after these vague notions.[521]

By such a statement Hancarville contradicted his eventual publication. There were copious, if often partial, vase images, but his text on the origins of art have precious little relation to the vase illustrations themselves.

The false praise of Hamilton's scholarship given by Hancarville in the preface camouflaged Hancarville's aim to produce a formative work on art history, much against Hamilton's original intention. Far from a straightforward *catalogue raisonné* of his collection, the work escalated into four beautiful folio volumes. There is no definitive answer as to why Hamilton allowed it, but the previous discussion on his lack of control in the publication process is important. Furthermore, the inclusion of vases from collections other than Hamilton's in *AEGR* demonstrated Hancarville's control.[522] In reality it was inevitable. After the first vase collection became the property of the British Museum in 1772, Hancarville required new sources of vases to maintain the number of coloured plates in each volume, as discussed below.

[520] Ibid., Vol. I, p. xviii.
[521] Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 7–8.
[522] This is especially common in *AEGR,* Volumes III and IV.

Hamilton was certainly an active patron. He lent Hancarville actual vases as well as books, and doubtless visited his busy workshop and print studio many times during the production of *AEGR* Volumes I and II. It was an exciting time, with Hamilton, Hancarville J. J. Winckelmann and his production team interacting with each other. Hancarville wrote of the domestic economy, at this point in the third person, that:

> For nine and a half months he has provided sustenance for seven persons who eat three times a day. He has had two additional domestics in his house; he has provided lodgings for the artists. My wife is working night and day to make our books.[523]

Had it not been for Winckelmann's untimely murder in Trieste in1768, *AEGR* might have been published in a very different manner. Winckelmann lodged with Hancarville whilst in Naples, and his house/workshop would contain newly printed coloured plates, destined for *AEGR*, while actual vases borrowed from the Envoy would have been visible and accessible for close study. In 1776, Hancarville's workshop was a hive of activity and it would please Hamilton to note the intense output of artistic skill involved in the publication of his collection.[524] The first volume of *AEGR* was produced with extraordinary speed. Nancy Ramage has explored in some depth the number and names of the artists working for Hancarville.[525] She identified six printmakers, three designers and three artists, some of whom had been employed in the production of *Le Antichità di ercolano esposte.* Here was a production factory. Hancarville ensured that Hamilton was aware of the energy he and his team devoted to the project. By 1767, over 200 plates had been engraved and 150 copies of Volume I, Plates1-84 had been printed. The concomitant to this amazing output was the speed at which the project's financial resources were used, leading to the further progress of *AEGR* becoming

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[523] Pascal Griener, *Le antichità Etrusche, Greche e Romane, 1766-1776 di Pierre Hugues d'Hancarville.* La pubblicazione delle ceramiche antiche della prima collezione Hamilton. (Editione dell'Elefante, Roma, 1992).
[524] Herrringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*, p. 131.
[525] Ramage, 'The Initial Letters', pp. 446–456.

erratic as funding sources dwindled. There was no social bar for Hamilton to be seen alongside the lower orders in a work setting, but that did not remove the 'glass ceiling' between them. Much was at stake for Hancarville in terms of his social and academic ambitions, while for Hamilton the enterprise involved personal prestige and both men aimed at cultivating the improvement of design. Hancarville consulted Hamilton over both the costs and the expansion of the work from one to four volumes, but the efficacy of Hancarville's persuasive oratory must have played its part in convincing the naïve Envoy to extend the work far beyond his original intention.

With two possible exceptions, the text was Hancarville's brainchild. His personal interest was to probe into prehistory to discover 'what system the ancients followed to give the vases that elegance which the World acknowledges to be in them'.[526] Even further into deep time, he queried why art existed at all.[527] He was well aware of the difficulties, having mused that 'Antiquity is a vast country, separated from our own by a long interval of time.'[528] Nevertheless he aspired to unravel what is now known as prehistory. Without an evidential base, such a phrase would be anathema to Hamilton who, in *Campi Phlegraei,* dismissed 'systems' as being of no worth without objective scientific evidence to support them. [529] Hancarville hoped to discover patterns by vase classification, a method which would use them as evidence and draw conclusions based from them, so adding an empirical background to his work. They showed 'The History, the Mythology and the Religious, Civil or Political customs of the ancients [sic].'[530] He perceived art as a language, not dissimilar to hieroglyphics. From early primitive gestures, signs could be inscribed in physical form, this leading to artistic

[526] Hancarville, *AEGR,* Preface.
[527] F. Haskell, *Country Life*, April 1987, p. 100.
[528] Hancarville, *AEGR*, Vol. III, p. 3.
[529] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. I, p. 5.
[530] Hancarville, *AEGR*, Preface, Vol. 1, p. xvi.

representation.[531] Although Hancarville's four volumes of text are important in themselves, he justified this thus: 'We believe that it will be readily acknowledged that it is not sufficient to have a general idea of the Vases of the Ancients, as they are given us in the Books of the Count Caylus and Father Montfaucon.'[532] Hancarville's text demonstrated a profound knowledge of the classics, using in particular Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Strabo's *Geography* and the art history of Pliny and Pausanias, knowledge which Hamilton could not hope to match. Although Hancarville's text contains interesting and original content, it is extremely hard to follow.[533]

AEGR Volumes III and IV are of a different order from Volumes I and II. From the start of Volume III Hancarville described his past intellectual life as being dead, even having Bracci draw an image of his imaginary mausoleum.[534] Part of his indulgent text reads, 'He made this epitaph for himself for when he should be a pilgrim in the underworld. He lived in Naples but Florence holds his body.' Herringman describes it as 'One of Hancarville's myriad inflections of the modesty trope.'[535] Hamilton was amongst those whom Hancarville now discarded, and so detached himself from the obsequious praise he gave Hamilton in Volume I.

Connections can be found between Hamilton and Hancarville in their use of universalism. Hancarville's underlying thesis was that of the universal origins of ancient art, for which he was given more ammunition by recent discoveries from the New World and Australasia, allowing primitive art to be viewed from this global dimension.[536] There is a parallel with aspects of *Campi Phegraei*, where Hamilton felt

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[531] Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes*. p. 50.
[532] Hancarville, *AEGR*, Preface, Vol. 1, p. xvi.
[533] For full detail of Hancarville's theories of the origin of art see Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*, Chapter 4.
[534] Hancarville, *AEGR,* Vol. III, p. 4.
[535] Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*, p. 144.
[536] The revelation of explorers such as Sir Joseph Banks, a friend of Hamilton, encouraged others to develop a universalist dimension to their thought.

certain that geological features in the Naples area were but part of systems that existed worldwide. Hancarville postulated that the origins of art might be found in primitive religious rites.[537] Hancarville deserves praise for his attempt to take art back into 'deep time'. Although less empirically based than Winckelmann, his exploration of ancient religion gives an anthropological approach to ancient art, in the form of a stylistic development from sign to figure.[538]

Hamilton, Hancarville and Winckelmann form a trio in relation to *AEGR.* Winckelmann has been discussed in relation to his acerbic comments relating to early excavations in the Buried Cities, whilst Hancarville aspired to enjoy an academic reputation similar to that of the German. Hamilton's relationship with them was as no more than patron, and certainly not collaborator. His closeness to the Neapolitan Royal Family, alongside his considerable influence, benefitted both parties. Shortly before his murder the Hamilton's visited Rome and spent time with Winckelmann, who clearly respected the Envoy. He wrote of him that he was '(o)ne with whom one could talk rationally and not muddle with questions of conscience or religion.'[539] Hancarville, too, admired Winckelmann, acknowledging that the *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* published in 1764, ahead of *AEGR,* was a masterpiece which combined geography, place and time. Its scope covered Persian history through Egyptian, Etruscan and Greek to Rome itself. Left untouched was the *terra incognito* of the prehistory and origins of art, the area which Hancarville endeavoured to fill.[540]

The preface to *AEGR* is a skilled blending of Hamilton's wishes, Hancarville's intentions and an acknowledgement of the Royal collections and *L'Antichità.* Hamilton was remote from the detail of the publication, as the introduction to *AEGR* makes

[537] Hamilton used a similar universalist approach to demonstrate that geological principles.
[538] See Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*, pp. 197 and 198.
[539] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 42 and Sloan, *Enlightenment*, p. 172.
[540] Orrell, 'Burying and Excavating', p. 176.

clear. Hancarville praised his patron for his diplomatic diligence, so excusing him for not writing the text himself, as he made clear in the introduction to *AEGR* Volume I:

> [For Hamilton] to publish the Cabinet which he has formed with so much knowledge, this work in the hands of one so much more capable than us of understanding its merits would have become as precious as the collection itself which gave birth to it , but since [he has] cares of a superior nature. . . we shall endeavour to supply that loss as much as possible, and make it a rule. . . *to explain with as much precision as we are able the ideas which he has been pleased to communicate to us.* We will add to them those with which a long study of the arts and of antiquity have furnished us.[541]

Even assuming the italicised passage in the quotation was hyperbolic, it suggested that Hamilton was, in some fashion, engaged with Hancarville's workshop – if only as its patron.

The dedications in Volumes I and II displayed a unity of purpose between Hamilton and Hancarville. Volume I is dated as 1766, with the publication date of the other three volumes offered as 1767. The reality was that the final two volumes were not in circulation until a decade later, after Hancarville had fled North from Naples to Florence in order to escape his creditors and the charges he faced in Naples of producing pornographic publications.[542] The text for the final volumes was written in Florence, either while he was in debtors' prison or from a monastery. Concurrently, he renounced his previous academic beliefs, even having Giuseppe Bracci draw a Roman *columbarium* with a memorial to his past. This was the point where Hamilton tired of the project, even though he could not abandon it, as subscribers to it expected the work to be completed.

Hancarville's new patron in Tuscany was the Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo I (1747–1792). The dedication to Volume III was to Leopold's father, Grand Duke Francesco II

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[541] Hancarville, *AEGR*, Vol. 1, Preface, p. vi. Author's italics.

[542] He later produced two explicitly pornographic books: *Monumens de la vie privée des XII Césars d'apres une suite de pierres et médailles gravées sous leur règne* (Capree, chez Sabellus, 1780), followed by *Monumens du culte secret des dames romaines* (Rome: De l'Imprimerie du Vatican, 1787).

(1708–1765). The previous devotion to George III was cast aside. The frontispiece to Volume III of *AEGR* had the Austrian eagle dominant, while the inscription describes Francesco as the 'best of princes'.[543] Hancarville endorsed the Florentine enthusiasm for the Etruscans, where he repudiates his (or more probably Winckelmann's) interpretation of the Hunt Krater.[544] More straightforward was the dedication to Volume IV. Here the Comte de Caylus was celebrated, if unexpectedly so. It reads: 'To his dead comrade A. Caylus, a well deserving man, with gratitude and happiness for his friendship.' Certainly their lives overlapped, but evidence for any personal friendship is scant, even if there can be no doubt about Hancarville's insistence on it in the frontispiece to *AEGR* Volume IV. One connection was that the full titles of *AEGR* and Caylus's title to his own work, *Recueil d'antiquités égyptiennes, étrusques, grecques, romaines et gauloises,* were so similar, while *AEGR* Volume III included a sheet of intaglio images that were taken from Caylus's work. What emerges from the title pages is that gratitude to Hamilton for his funding and patronage, so evident in Volume I, leeched away volume by volume until Hamilton became of little consequence, except as a financial backer. Correspondence between the two men continued, but it was now confined to financial matters, with Hancarville pushing Hamilton to make further investment in Volumes III and IV. Only the Envoy's quick actions in paying Hancarville's creditors in Florence prevented the engraved copper plates from being melted down for the value of the metal. Hamilton was, at further cost, successful in ensuring a limited print run for Volumes III and IV.

J.J. Winckelmann's connection with *AEGR* was important. Hancarville was aware that Winckelmann was sympathetic to the idea of the predominantly Greek and South Italian origins of the vases. Hancarville, on the other hand, once he had fled Naples to

[543] See Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity* p. 173, fn. 27.
[544] Hancarville, *AEGR*, Vol. I, pp. 155–177.

Northern Italy, where eponymous culture was Etruscan, changed his previous leaning towards Greek origin for many vases to become an outwards supporter of there being a major Etruscan influence on Greek culture. He wrote that 'It is probable that the Grecians who bragged of having invented all the arts would have. . .employed the architecture of the Tuscans as they did eventually to the very Citadel of Athens and in the Temple of Minerva.'[545] In part, Hancarville was conscious that his tenure in Naples was insecure and had one eye on those with influence in Northern Italy whose patronage he might need and who were adamant that vases were of Etruscan origin. Previously in the thesis, Giovanni Battista Passeri's *Picturae Etruscorum in vasculis nunc primum in unum collectae* has been discussed as an early work devoted to ancient vases, attributed by Passeri to the Etruscans and not the Greeks. After Hancarville fled to Tuscany, where Volumes III and IV of *AEGR* were produced, it is noteworthy that any mention of a Greek origin for the vases was muted.

It was in 1769 that Hancarville was forced to flee his creditors and move to Florence. Winckelmann's time in Naples was equally tenuous. After his strident criticism of the government-sponsored excavations at Herculaneum, he too feared that he might be banished from the Kingdom. Although Hamilton's role was limited, he took a patrician interest in the development of *AEGR* and it seems probable that both Hancarville and Winckelmann looked to him as one who might support them at Court.

An In-Depth Study of Aspects of AEGR

The focus now turns to the hectic years of creativity, 1766 and 1767, during which most of the plates for *AEGR* I and II were prepared. The evidence, not fully developed in modern scholarship, points to Winckelmann having a personal input into *AEGR*.

[545] Ibid., *AEGR*, Vol. I, p. 96.

Vicki Coltman mentions him in passing, stating that Winckelmann wrote of ancient vases that 'A collection of them is a real treasure of drawings.'[546] Jenkins, in *Vases and Volcanoes*, makes a brief mention of Hamilton attempting to persuade Winckelmann to write the descriptions for his first vase collection in *AEGR* by suggesting 'There was the hope that he would receive the imprimatur of Winckelmann's descriptions.'[547] David Constantine offers a broad hint of collaboration, stating that Winckelmann '(w)as the best, and recruiting him was a coup'.[548] Hamilton had offered to assist Winckelmann in publicising his *Monumenti Antici Inediti* (1767) and, within the rationale of the Republic of Letters, might well have hoped for reciprocity.[549]

It is possible to demonstrate that Winckelmann was instrumental in writing pages 155–177 of *AEGR*, Volume I. Internal evidence supports an assertion that Winckelmann was the primary author for these pages. Stylistically the text stands in stark contrast to Hancarville's essay on sculpture and painting which precedes it. His abstract thought is interspersed with both examples and references to contemporary commentators, resulting in a text through which ideas do not easily progress. Yet Winckelmann's *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* is logically divided into short, clear sections with an easily discernible style. Even in translation the passage from *AEGR* considered here demonstrates it. Winckelmann's prose is clear and concise, while Hancarville uses a scattergun of ideas with limited cohesion. His writing was more a collection of essays than a closely reasoned whole. Jenkins describes *AEGR* as having 'a pictorial beauty and great literary energy, but all this is belied by the chaos of the text'.[550] Hancarville acknowledged Winckelmann's talent:

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[546] Vicky Coltman, 'Sir William Hamilton's Vase Publications (1766-1776): A Case Study in the Reproduction and Dissemination of Antiquity', *Journal of Design History,* 14, 1, 2001, p. 5.
[547] Ibid, p. 48.
[548] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, pp. 36–37.
[549] J.J. Winckelmann *Monumenti Antici Inediti* (Rome, 1767).
[550] Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes*, p. 46.

> What the Abbé Winckelmann has said of [ancient paintings] in his History of the Arts, and in his Monuments of Antiquity, it is that there one may read an infinity of curious observations supported by well-chosen examples seen with as much taste as could be desired. . . and shewn with an intelligence and an Erudition that renders them useful and interesting to the lovers of the Arts and the men of Letters who will find that we have not done sufficiently or well enough, and who are not acquainted with the works we are speaking of, will at least be obliged to us for pointing out those that are better than our own.[551]

A close study of the Hunt Krater and the Volumina Amphora demonstrates Winckelmann's involvement in the text of *AEGR*, Volume I. The Hunt Krater (*Figure 19.1 & 19.3.*) depicts a boar hunt, a recurrent theme in mythology represented on Greek and South Italian vases. It is accompanied by an excellent description, a full commentary on the mythology, a discussion of its find-spot, and an analysis of its painter's technique.[552] Galloping horsemen race round the vessel to meet those engaged in hand-to-hand combat with the animal. The commentary shows detailed observation: 'You see the dog which accompanies them and seems to be wounded in one of his forepaws.' Likewise, a realistic context is offered for the painting. The names on the vases are analysed, but the author admits they cannot be connected either with the Calydonian boar hunt or with the story of Heracles and Eumaeus. The logical assertion given is that this vase represents a South Italian scene rather than a mainland Greek event, the mythological link being the Trojan War. The bird motifs on the vase were not analysed at this point, but readers were referred to Caylus, who had commented that 'these sort of birds are frequently seen on Etruscan monuments'.[553] Winckelmann wrote in the History of Ancient Art that 'I must remark that a large unknown bird is also found on a vase, marked with the most ancient Greek writing,

[551] Hancarville, *AEGR*, Vol. 1, p. 152.
[552] BM Catalogue of Vases, 1772,0320.6.
[553] In Volume III he revised this opinion, arguing that every element of vase painting had a specific meaning. The birds included in the hunt were, to him, redolent with meaning and intended to signify *moira,* birds being an important means of divination in antiquity.

and exhibiting a chase found in the museum of Mr Hamilton.'[554] It is followed by themes related to the social context and origin of the vessel, the colour of the clay showing its origins as Capuan. It was dated as 658 BCE, a remarkably accurate assessment as, after a further 250 years of vase scholarship, its current dating is *circa* 575 BCE. Finally, the style was analysed. The figuring, although allowed to be lively, was deemed crude, the images being entirely in profile, with dubious use made of the scriber to add detail. The representation of the boar was singled out for praise as showing genuine emotion, with the boar in agony, knowing death to be inevitable. Its author notes the patterns of black dots in the filling ornament relating it to '(t)he red, white and black dots which the Italians call *vita alba'*. He concludes that the vase was of South Italian Greek origin, commenting that 'These remarks authorise us to look on this vase as one of the most ancient monuments on the painting.'[555] The case for Winckelmann being its author is strengthened further by stylistic comparison between the commentary on the Hunt Krater and a passage from his *History of Ancient Art*. The quotation below is from the description of the Hunt Krater in *AEGR* Volume I:

> It is plain to be perceived that the Painters then were only acquainted with the outline and action and that they endeavoured to detail the interior parts of the figure, which they marked out rudely by lines nearly parallel to one another; and as they were totally unacquainted with the shadows which give roundness to the parts, they filled the spaces between the outlines with simple colours laid flat. However, one may remark here that the action of the figures is full of a lively fire, and that the proportions are very just, by which neither the men nor animals want either expression or character.[556]

Compare the style with that of Winckelmann:

> In most [vases] the figures are painted with a single colour only, or to speak more correctly the colour of the figures is the true ground of the vases or the natural colour of the very fine burnt clay itself; but the field of the picture or the colour

[554] J.J. Winckelmann, *History of Ancient Art* (1764), p. 260.
[555] Hancarville, *AEGR*, Vol. I, plate 24.
[556] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 157.

> between the figures is a shining blackish colour with which the outlines of the figures are painted on the reddish-yellow ground.[557]

Surely Winckelmann must have written both. However, after Hancarville's expulsion from Naples to Florence he reinterpreted the description with one more suited to the Florentine belief that the culture that produced the vases was Etruscan.[558]

The 'Volumnia Amphora' (*Figure 19.1*) might well be Hancarville's modification of Winckelmann's original description, as it lacks the acute analysis accompanying the Hunt Krater. The imagery of this vase focuses on a mythology purporting to describe it, but with no supporting evidence. Its author claimed the scene to be that of 'Volumnia, Mother of Coriolanus', derived from Plutarch's *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*. By modern standards the vase is described with wild speculation:

> Of the three figures which compose this little Picture, that which is fitting appears to represent Volumnia Mother of Coriolanus, Hersilia his wife is near her Mother in Law, and Valeria, sister of the illustrious Valerio Publico, seems to be introduced by Hersilia. . . [The image] seems to say it is for your country. . . your household gods. . . it is for the glory of Rome which gave you birth.[559]

No explanation is offered for this strange statement, while modern commentators have perceived the image as two women playing ball.[560] Yet some of the vase is acutely observed. The description also contains a passage which expounds Winckelmann and Hancarville's theory that Renaissance artists, especially Raphael, must have had access to ancient vases. Winckelmann commented on finely drawn vessels that 'The drawings on most of the vases is of such a quality that the figures deservedly have a place in a drawing by Raphael.'[561] The commentary at this point in

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557 Winckelmann, *History of Ancient Art*, pp. 269–270.
558 Hancarville, *AEGR*, Vol. III, p. 209.
559 Ibid., Vol. I, p. 164.
560 Madelaine Gisler-Huwiler and Sebastian Schutze, *The Collection of Antiquities from the Cabinet of Sir William Hamilton* (Taschen Books, Cologne, 2004), p. 48.
561 Winckelmann, *History of Ancient Art*, Vol. I, p. 271.

AEGR states that 'Those acquainted with Raphael would not look upon this little piece as unworthy of him.'[562] This reference links directly to the Krater's description in *AEGR*, so giving further weight to the probability that Winckelmann was the author of this Appendix to Volume I. The difference it would have made to *AEGR* had Winckelmann described all the vases can only be imagined. Hamilton's dependence on Hancarville has been discussed, but had Winckelmann survived and provided the descriptions to the engraved vases, Hamilton's desire for a *catalogue raisonné* might have been fulfilled. They stand alone in *AEGR* Volumes I and II as the only significant descriptions of high-quality ancient vessels, while the close connection between illustration and commentary greatly enhanced the reader's understanding of these two vases.

The illustrations in AEGR

It is the magnificence of the plates that follow the text in *AEGR* that are the greatest legacy of the work. Some illustrations offer a vase in its entirety, with exact dimensions given on an outline drawing followed by a two-dimensional image of the vase. The latter must not be taken at face value. Whereas the vase would be accurately copied, the extrusion would be a ready-made plate for designers, shown in *Figure 20.3.* It demonstrates how images in *AEGR* are not all copies of vases. In many cases, details from an actual vase was assigned to the border, thus utterly changing the nature of the original vessel. Viewers would enjoy the design, based on an actual vase, without ever knowing the true nature of the original artefact. This approach distinguishes *AEGR* from Passeri's *Picturae Etruscorum In Vasculis* (*Figure 17*), where complete vases are illustrated, frequently followed by pictorial detail from the object and an indication of where the vases were located. In the case of *AEGR*, the focus

[562] Hancarville, *AEGR*., Vol. I, p. 166.

moved, to some extent, from actuality to presenting beautiful images for copyists. As shown in the next Chapter, one of Hamilton's primary objectives was to offer images that artists might use in their own work to improve design in the Neoclassical mode.

Because they are integral to Hancarville's text, the vignettes with which chapters begin are frequently unconsidered. Such capitals were commonplace in large folio works of the age, but in *AEGR* their function was to emphasise the content of Hancarville's essays and so enhance his reputation as a writer.[563] An example is shown in *Figure 18.3*. They are exquisite works of art in themselves and many can be traced to Piranesi's work, even if unacknowledged. By contemporary standards, the capitals were very large, some seven to eight centimetres and far more varied than in other works. Exquisitely drawn, their principal engraver was Giusseppe Bracci, to whom Hancarville entrusted many important artistic elements and whose excellence he acknowledged.[564] A number of the vignettes plagiarise Piranesi, who did not object to his work being used in this way. He admired *AEGR*, even dedicating a plate to Hamilton, describing him as *'Amatore delle Belle Arti'*.[565] The other engraver involved was Edmondo Beaulieu (fl. 1760–1770). His metier was to use classicising images as background to the initial letter. *Figure 18*.3, drawn by Bracci, demonstrated his skill in linking antiquity with the text in *AEGR*, in this case the letter 'M' **L** within an image of Paestum. Hancarville commented that 'We will finish this Volume by advertising the Public that it is not to us that they owe the discovery of the manner in which the plates are printed, but to Mr. Joseph Bracci a most ingenious and able artist.'[566]

[563] See Ramage, N., 'The Initial Letters in Sir William Hamilton's 'Collection of Antiquities', *The Burlington Magazine* (July 1987), pp. 446-456.
[564] Hancarville offered brief descriptions of the engraved capitals in *AEGR*, Vol. I, pp. 174–177.
[565] Ramage, 'The Initial Letters'. p. 453.
[566] Hancarville, *AEGR*, Vol. I, p. 170. For a fuller description see Lissarrague and Reed, 'The Collector's Books', p. 281.

A striking feature of *AEGR* was the elaborate title page introducing each volume. Viewed collectively, these pages revealed the changing relationship between Hamilton and Hancarville during the decade 1766 to 1776. An example is given as *Figure 18.2*. Referring to the task of publication, Hancarville acknowledged that:

> He [Hamilton] has been pleased to entrust the publication [to us], exacting nothing from us, but perfection in execution and fidelity in the drawing and reserving to himself the honour only. . . of bringing them to light under the auspices of a great king, to whom he has been attached from his infancy.[567]

The title page for Volume I is an elaborate homage to George III. It acknowledged the monarch as the source of the Envoy's power, symbolised by the fasces and axe close to the inscription which emphasised royal sovereignty. The link with antiquity was demonstrated by the pelike partly obscuring the fasces. It paralleled the title page of *L'Antichità*, which glorified its patron King Charles III, who was similarly surrounded with ancient artefacts (*Figure 15.1*). The covers of the volumes themselves blazoned Hamilton's name and rank together with the Hamilton coat of arms (*Figure 18.1*).

The frontispiece to *AEG*R, Volume II demonstrated Winckelmann's influence on Hancarville (*Figure 22.1, Centre**Left***). Many have seen the grieving figure beside the tomb as Hancarville, clearly associating himself as closely as possible with the great scholar. Because of these connections, it is probable that Hamilton would have approved this memorial plate for, like Hancarville, he gained personally by the association with Winckelmann. The sarcophagus, like those of the second century CE with lion-head handles, framed a valedictory inscription. The text is capable of several readings. Orrells translates it as follows:

> Opening with the standard 'D[is] M[anibus]', 'to the departed spirits', [continuing with] 'for Johann Win[c]kelmann, the best man, the dearest friend', ['IOAN.WINKELMANN .VIR.OPT.AMIC.KARISS'], it goes on, 'Pierre d'Hancarville, in grief, has made [this monument]' ['PET. DHANCARVILLE. DOLENS FECIT']. The inscription ends with the very unusual language [for an inscription at least]

[567] Hancarville, *AEGR*, Vol. 1, Preface, p. iv ff.

> 'ORCO. PEREGRINO', which we can for now translate, 'he died far from home', referring to the fact that Winckelmann died in Trieste.[568]

The article then speculates that the image conveys gnostic messages. Contemporary translations of 'ORCO PEREGRINO' suggested the departed was not inside the sarcophagus and might imply that the dead was buried in the grave of an unrelated family. The tomb is empty as, are the niches for funerary urns. Orrells ponders whether 'The image confronts the viewer with the question, how was Winckelmann to be remembered and memorialized? As someone who was once a living human being, flesh and blood, or as an abstract idea?' [569] This perception would be helpful to Hancarville, demonstrating that Winckelmann's work was unfinished. Clearly the essays in *AEGR* on the prehistory of art were intended to complement those of Winckelmann. Hancarville believed that both men were equal partners in these revolutionary discoveries in the history of art, a view which subsequent historiography did not share.

The relationship between the Winckelmann memorial and the full engraving beside it is puzzling (*Figure 22.1, right* ***centre*****).** It seems closely linked to the aims of The Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, founded in 1754 and of which Hamilton was a member. The Latin text might be translated as 'To his comrades united for the enhancement of agriculture and commerce and of the skills of Britain's leader.' In 1765 Hamilton was under diplomatic pressure to discover the actual wealth of the Kingdom of Naples, which may link to the insertion of 'AGRIC', but it could also be a subtle sub-text extoling 'Farmer' George III's interest in agriculture [570]

[568] Orrells, Daniel Burying and excavating Winckelmann's History of Art. *Journal of Classical Reception*, Volume 3, Number 2, 2011. pp. 166-188
[569] Ibid., p. 173.
[570] National Archive, State Papers 93. 273.

It is possible that it was the intended frontispiece for Volume II, but the shock of Winckelmann's death demanded the previous dedicatory engraving.

William Hamilton collected a significant number of inscribed gems, which were of relevance to *AEGR.* Shortly after his arrival in Naples, he purchased a large collection from the Neapolitan, the Duke of Carafanoia. Like vases, they were popular collectors' items, themselves miniature artworks enlivened further when set in precious metal.[571] A further advantage was that they could more readily be displayed than vases. Soon after his arrival in Naples, by large-scale purchases of vases and intaglios, alongside his existing fine art collection, Hamilton gave an immediate impression of scholarly connoisseurship to his numerous visitors. The intaglios should be viewed in parallel with ancient vases in offering a visual access to the ancient world. Their imagery was multi-faceted. Winckelmann devised a rationale for their cataloguing. The most common method was to classify engravings by geography – Indian, Persian or Egyptian – but then sub-divide those from the Graeco-Roman world. Winckelmann made use of the comprehensive intaglio collection of Baron Philipp von Stoch (1691–1757), viewing them as invaluable for 'the birth, growth and different phases of art'.[572] Hancarville was particularly impressed by the collection, as he perceived it as a means of dating, and so moving back in time to the origin of ancient art. However, Hamilton's collection was now in London and so inaccessible to Hancarville. The intaglio illustrations in AEGR Volume III were from Caylus's *Recueil d'antiquités*, an example of Hancarville using illustrations from many collections apart from that of Hamilton.

There is confusion at the end of *AEGR* Volume I, probably connected with Winckelmann's death and thus his inability to provide further descriptions. There was

[571] Gertrud Seidmann, 'The Grand Tourist's Favorite Souvenirs: Cameos and Intaglios', *RSA Journal* 144, 5475, December 1996, pp. 63–64.
[572] Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes*, p.95.

the promise of four vase descriptions, but the delivery of only two. Pages 170 and 171 sought to justify the seismic change in the nature of the publication. Hancarville is precise:

> Our plan which was at first to have published the two Volumes together, the first was to have contained the dissertations promised in our preface, the second with the Plates which was to have contained their explanation which completed the work.[573]

Had it materialised, a far more cohesive outcome would have ensued

The worth of *AEGR* to the scholarly world remains a subject of much speculation. Lissarrangue and Reed view it as a sophisticated and integrated work: 'What is unique in *AEGR* is the complex relationship between images and text and the incorporation of prints that are reproduced in earlier standard works on antiquities and collections.'[574] Unfortunately, inadequate explanation is given to the 'complex relationship'. A contrary view is offered by Michael Vickers, who dismisses *AEGR* as a marketing exercise designed to boost the value of Hamilton's collection prior to its sale. This is a strange assumption in that Hamilton's vases were already in London before Volumes III and IV of *AEGR* were completed. Vickers perceives the end of Volume I, where Hancarville offers an unconvincing explanation for the lack of commentary on the illustrations. as 'an astute marketing job' to publicise Hamilton's vases. Vickers opines that as Volume I was published in 1768, and Volume II in 1770, the ending of Volume I was clearly intended to whet the public's appetite with a foretaste (i.e. Winckelmann's commentary on the Hunt Krater and the Volumina amphora) designed to increase the sales of Volume II. [575]

There is no mention of Winckelmann's death in 1768, which is surprising, as it is probable that he had agreed to offer commentaries on the vase images in Volumes I

[573] Hancarville, *AEGR*, Vol. 1, p. 171.
[574] Lissarrague and Reed, 'The Collector's Books', p. 277.
[575] Vickers, 'Value and Simplicity', pp. 98–137.

and II. As has been seen, Herringman's reconstruction of the production process demonstrates the scale and complexities in the publication of *AEGR*, while the extreme financial pressure placed on both Hamilton and Hancarville during the publication process makes Vickers's explanation impossible. Hamilton required money immediately and could not cling on to his collection in the hope that prices would rise.[576] Vickers continues his theory by analysing passages from Hancarville's text which, he claims, exaggerated the financial worth of vases in the ancient world and, by extrapolation, asserts that Hancarville was attempting to increase their value in the contemporary world. Ian Jenkins expresses the view supported here:

> Vases, then, both in antiquity and in the modern commodities market had their price. I cannot, however, agree with the idea, which has gained some support of late, that in publishing the first collection of vases d'Hancarville and Hamilton were involved in an 'astute marketing job'.[577]

With the sudden introduction of the promise of four vase descriptions, but the delivery of only two, confusion marks the end of Volume I. The probability is that Winckelmann had agreed to describe the plates, which would have resulted in a coherent two-volume work containing beautiful title pages, textual vignettes, vase illustrations and descriptions. His demise may have been the catalyst enabling Hancarville to renegotiate the terms of his agreement with Hamilton by allowing *AEGR* to be extended to four volumes. Hancarville continued his essay-writing alongside undescribed vases, which so diminished the ultimate worth of *AEGR*. In short, the text of Volume I ends with vague promises, but which allow for the introduction of vases not in Hamilton's collection and for further essays by Hancarville. A straightforward interpretation would point to changed circumstances, the death of Winckelmann, a weak Hamilton and a manipulative Hancarville.

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[576] Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*, p. 145 ff.
[577] Ian Jenkins, 'Seeking the Bubble Reputation', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 2, 1997, p. 195.

No rationale has been discovered for the order of the coloured plates in *AEGR*. Lissarrague and Reed discuss the issue, pointing out that in the later volumes a significant number of illustrations were from other publications.[578] Three vases reproduced were in the collections of Anton Mengs and published by Winkelmann in his *Monumenti Antichi Inediti* (Ancient remains unpublished). Considering Hancarville's determination that *AEGR* should be seen to predate *Picturae Etruscorum,* it is remarkable that vases from the Biscari collection, published by Passeri in *Picturae Etruscorum,* appear in Volume III of *AEGR*. The Vatican is another major source for the non-Hamiltonian vases. Lissarrague offers a reasoned conclusion:

> Through his selections and combinations of vases, it appears that d'Hancarville was engaged in a deliberate competition with the major aristocratic collections (Florence, Catania, Vienna, the Vatican and Paris) as well as the antiquarian productions of Dempster, Montfaucon, Gori and Passeri.[579]

It is left to evaluate the worth of *AEGR*. In terms of scholarship it is not the best of the antiquarian works, even if arguably the most beautiful. Its text is inconsistent, both in terms of structure and coherence. Although publicly announcing his 'conversion' from previous error in Volume III, Hancarville left Volumes I and II unaltered, while the essays following his publicised rebirth in Florence reflect the views of North Italy by emphasising an imagined Etruscan heritage. Even so, the text of *AEGR* is significant as one of those offering a global perspective to the origins of art.

Published in Naples and Florence between 1766 and 1776, Volumes I and II were the first colour-plate folio works on art history published in a standard edition of several hundred copies. It cannot be perceived as a work on vases, as was *Picturae etruscorum in vasculis*, as the text was dominated by a treatise on the origins of art, with profuse vase illustrations mostly unconnected to the text. Furthermore, many of

[578] Lissarrague and Reed, 'The Collector's Books', pp. 278–279.
[579] Ibid., p. 286.

the vases illustrated were themselves composites, with a focus on design rather than the *actualité* of the vase itself.

A common British understanding of *AEGR* has apparently allowed Hamilton ,rather than Hancarville, to become its pseudo-author. Fothergill wrote 'Hamilton set such a high standard in the production of these works' while Constantine's text contains the phrase 'Volume II of Hamilton's Vases'. The Taschen Books folio edition depicting the vases within *AEGR* devotes a page of commentary to Hancarville, but his original text and the vignettes within it are not shown, so emphasising Hamilton rather than the author.[580] However, the title pages of the four volumes are included in the Taschen edition, together with modern research identifying the current location of most of the vases. It was the mismatch between the text and the plates which significantly lowered the academic worth of *AEGR*. Had it been produced with a commentary on the plates it would have proved to be a coherent work of excellence. Conversely, had Hancarville learned from Winckelmann how to write in a pellucid and coherent manner, with appropriate illustration, then a great work of scholarship might have resulted. The reality was that *AEGR* failed to achieve Hamilton's objectives, and the plates were, for the most part, a distraction from Hancarville's text. The images achieved one aim of Hamilton, namely, to produce illustrations which designers might copy or develop. *AEGR*'s plates advanced the art of colour printing. Negatively, the lack of effective descriptions of almost all the vases illustrated, lessened it as a work for both scholars and connoisseurs alike. It was the Neoclassicism of the age and the beauty of Greek vases that overcame the many flaws of *AEGR*.

[580] (NB. Footnote continues on P. 195). Sebastian Schutze and Marcia Gisler-Huwiler, eds., *Collection of Etruscan, Greek and Roman antiquities from the Cabinet of the Hon. W. Hamilton* (Taschen Books, Cologne, 2004). A more balanced view of the relative contributions of Hamilton and Hancarville are to
found in Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes* together with Herringman, *Sciences of Antiquity*.

The effect of the publication of *AEGR* was markedly different for both collaborators. It was a difficult time for Hancarville. He made considerable personal financial contributions to the project, without the sources of income enjoyed by Hamilton, and was then exiled from Naples in disgrace. The reason given was for obscene publications. The many explicit sexual images in *AEGR* simply reproduce vase imagery, but the two-dimensional images, although based on a specific vase painting, tended to exaggerate the erotic element.[581] Such imagery was not mandatory, but for the upper echelons of society at the date of publication it was acceptable and may have added to the volume of sales. Hancarville's position worsened in Florence, where he was imprisoned for debt. Concurrently, Hamilton was hot on his heels to reclaim the precious engraved copper plates of *AEGR.* Without Hamilton's endeavours and still further financial outlay to secure the plates, Hancarville's *magnum opus* might never have been realised. It is unsurprising that after a decade of overspend and frustration, Hamilton wearied of the project and his relationship with Hancarville effectively ended at the point when the final volume was published. The 'Baron' continued to be a force in scholarship, publishing several books on classical themes. Later, he worked in London over a long period, ironically producing the British Museum's catalogue of their acquisition of Hamilton's first collection. His gain was that *AEGR* and his many other publications accorded him the status of a classical scholar.

The result of *AEGR*'s publication for Hamilton must be viewed in relation to the many personal triumphs of his early years in Naples, as a natural philosopher, his diplomatic promotion and his success in relationships with the Neapolitan hierarchy. *AEGR* was important, but the Envoy should be understood only as patron of Hancarville's endeavours. During the process, Hamilton learned a great deal

[581] Hancarville, *AEGR,* Vol. II, plate 32.

concerning book publication, which assisted him in the productions of his own books. As has been noted, *Campi Phegraei* was a considerable success, as was the publication of his second vase collections decades later. This later work's elongated title emphasised Sir William's expertise:

> *Collection of engravings from ancient vases mostly of pure Greek workmanship discovered in sepulchres in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, but chiefly in the neighbourhood of Naples during the course of the years MDCCLXXXIX and MDCCLXXXX now in the possession of Sir Wm. Hamilton… with remarks on each vase by the collector.*

AEGR did much to build further his reputation as a connoisseur of antiquities, a major collector and a patron of designers and it is his, rather than Hancarville's, name which remains associated with *AEGR*.

AEGR remains the memorial to just one segment of Hamilton's great collection.[582] It is doubtful how many of the original subscribers would have read Hancarville's text but found it an excellent 'coffee-table' work. Lord Kildare was in Naples on the Grand tour and he purchased a volume of *AEGR* in 1767. Perhaps anxious about the price he paid for it, he wrote to his mother describing the work as 'A very good ornament to the library and a pleasant book to dip in, as there is [sic] very pretty figures, and vases to draw from. It'll also oblige Mr Hamilton, who has been very civil to me.' [583] With less enthusiasm Lord Fitzwilliam (1748-1833) subscribed to the work, commenting that:

> The work is a very pretty one and perfectly well executed, but excessively dear, as must be expected when a gentleman dilettante is engaged on it. . . but the price far exceeds the utility that can ever be derived from the work. However, one must subscribe to it, to please Mr. Hamilton because he deserves to be pleased; but I own the subscription sticks in my stomach, for I could lay out the money much more to my satisfaction.[584]

That many of the vases illustrated within *AEGR* were not from the Hamilton collection was unremarked upon. Thus, *AEGR,* taken alongside the vases displayed in the British

[582] Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes*, p. 49.
[583] Ingamells, *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers*, p. 361.
[584] Quoted by E.A. Smith, 'Lord Fitzwilliam's Grand Tour', *History Today*, 17, 1967, p. 399.

Museum, raised Hamilton's profile and status. Sir William himself was later appointed a Trustee of the British Museum. That most of the beautiful vase illustrations were not true representation of the originals was uncriticised. The prints became art objects in themselves:

> Consequently, the volumes became a kind of elite performance, where 'truth and precision' lay not in the relationship between the original and the copy, but the conviction of the performance and the skill of the operation. In other words, 'truth and precision' could be the 'truth and precision' of invention as well as imitation. Both could share the status of the 'original' and sustain the fabricated 'truth' of the performance through its many reproductions [585]

A by-product of *AEGR*'s fame was that it also linked with his diplomatic work. The constant stream of notables passing through the Palazzo Sessa extended far beyond English visitors to Naples. Vases were just part of the cultured ambience at the Embassy and were viewed alongside Hamilton's classical sculpture, gems and his collection of paintings. [586] Vases adorned the public rooms and inevitably attracted the attention of his guests. They formed a background for the musical soirées at which Catherine Hamilton presided and performed (See *Figure 2*). Collectively, visitors to the Palazzo Sessa, the effective British Embassy, would leave with an impression that the Envoy represented a very cultured country.

The conclusion to be drawn from this discourse is that *AEGR* was the first grandiose edition in art history to have high quality coloured plates and was extremely influential in northern Europe, furthering Neoclassical taste. Yet until very recently, apart from the vase illustrations, Hancarville's essays were largely forgotten and he failed in his attempt to be recognised as Winckelmann's scholastic equal. *AEGR's* plates capture the zeitgeist of the age in terms of connoisseurship but, lacking description or provenance, they fail to do justice to Hamilton's collection itself. Although his main

[585] Coltman 'Sir William Hamilton's Vase Publications', p. 16.
[586] For a full account of Hamilton's picture collection see Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes*, pp. 75–94.

contribution to the work was financial, he assisted in its publication by loaning books and vases and also through his ability as a connoisseur. His extensive networks undoubtedly increased sales of *AEGR.*[587] Notwithstanding, he gained considerable personal benefit from *AEGR's* publication, both within the Republic of Letters and from his influential friends in Britain, many of whom failed to understand the limited role he played in *AEGR's* production. A further consequence was that he found himself the fulcrum for requests for copies, not only for *AEGR*, but for other works including *Le Antichità di Ercolano Esposte*, which were not in his power to bestow.[588] History has reduced Hancarville's role, while it is Hamilton who is remembered as the person who popularised Greek vases in *AEGR,* enhanced by visitors who viewed the first collection in the Hamilton Gallery of the British Museum. It is not the end of the matter. Once the tipping point was reached, and ancient vases became widely admired, *AEGR* was, as Hamilton wished, used extensively by designers. The next chapter will explore how the vases and images from them were used to bring the 'middling people' into enjoying a version of them, mass produced by Wedgwood and others.

[587] Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes*. p. 48.
[588] See Morrison, Letter 16. London, Lord Bruce to Hamilton ,08 03 1769.

Chapter Five

Trading and Collecting: The Artistic and Commercial Development of Hamilton's Vase Collections

The previous chapter considered Hamilton, his vase collections and their publication with little reference to the sources of income by which he financed them. It is an important element in understanding Hamilton, as throughout his life he was constrained by fiscal uncertainty. For this reason, it forms the first section of this chapter. Hamilton's interaction with the British nobility is important. They treated him for the most part with respect and courtesy, reciprocated by the Envoy. Even so, in terms of wealth, he was not their equal. To compensate, his Neapolitan lifestyle exudes affluence, while his antiquities collections rival those whose financial means far exceeded his. The thesis asserts that this was possible only through trading and heavy reliance on the patience of Hamilton's bankers. Having established his fiscal status, the thesis continues to explore the reception of his vases, using the famous Meidias Vase for a close study. The final part of the chapter explores how Neoclassical imagery, often originating from Hamilton's collection, became enmeshed with the bulk production of artefacts which became part of Neoclassical ornamentation common in the homes of the middling people. There is particular reference to the Wedgwood Factory in this regard.

Hamilton' income and expenditure

Hamilton's lifestyle in Naples required a large income to support it but estimates of it vary wildly. Kim Sloan assessed the income that Catherine Barlow brought on her marriage to William Hamilton as £1000 (c. £146,000) per annum, a sum based on the

1792 estate return at a time when it was heavily mortgaged, not least because of Lady Emma Hamilton's demands.[589] Jonathon North cites the figure as £8000 (c. £1,170,000).[590] Sloan's estimate of Catherine Hamilton's wealth in 1764 is surely pessimistic, as her holdings included not just farmland but also anthracite mines, forests and ferry rights in Pembrokeshire. Even so, the figure of £8000 is optimistic, particularly when considering Hamilton's state of near bankruptcy.[591] Prior to his Neapolitan appointment, he had a small income as Equerry to the Prince of Wales. As Envoy to Naples his salary was initially £2,190 (£400,000) per annum, rising to £2,900 (£470,000) when he was promoted to become Envoy Plenipotentiary. Taking a middle path between the various estimates of Catherine's worth, we could estimate the Hamiltons' combined incomes at approximate to one million pounds annually in a 2020 equivalent sum. Had his financial outlay been less excessive, a more than comfortable life would clearly have been possible in Naples.

In part, Hamilton's obsession with collecting was responsible for his inability to live within his means. As noted earlier, he admitted the problem to Charles Greville.[592] His amassed antiquities, gems and fine art purchase concurrently incurred further heavy expenses on publications. The reality was that throughout his life, Hamilton lived at the limits of his credit, demonstrated by the repeated sales of his collections of fine art, gems and vases. His earliest art collections, made before his diplomatic appointment to Naples, were auctioned in 1761 and 1765, a trend which was to continue with the sale of both the first and second vase collections in 1772 and 1797

[589] Morrison. Letter 204, Greville to Hamilton, London, Undated ?1792.
[590] Jonathan North, *Nelson at Naples: Revolution and Retribution in 1799* (Amberley Publishing, Stroud, 2018).
[591] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, pp. 12–13.
[592] Morrison, Letter 182, Hamilton to Greville, Naples, 06 06 1790.

respectively.[593] It grieved Hamilton when forced to sell his first art collection to cover debt. By 1800, after his ignominious recall from Naples, he lived in reduced circumstances in London, with his lands around Milford Haven heavily mortgaged. The government refuted many of his claims for expenses and failed to pay those that they acknowledged, while at the same time his bankers hounded him.[594] He seemed incapable of personal accounting, in part because he hoped that it would not be a concern when past expenses were repaid by the British Government. An example is the rationale he gave the Foreign Department in London for the cost involved at the marriage of King Ferdinand to Princess Maria Carolina in 1768:

> His Majesty's wedding has actually put me to the extraordinary expense of upward of one thousand pounds, four hundred of which were not sunk as they were the addition of jewels which were necessary for Mrs Hamilton's appearance at Court. Illuminations, masquerades balls etc . . .have swallowed up the rest. I only wish that the King may be informed of these circumstances leaving it afterwards entirely to the decision of the His Majesty whether the whole of this extraordinary expense is to fall on me or not. [595]

Hamilton's correspondence contains many instances of his financial concerns. He was at his most open on the subject in private correspondence with his nephew Charles Greville. A typical example is when Hamilton purchased three paintings on Greville's behalf in December 1777, noting that he would make a profit from their purchase: 'If you get [the] paintings for 750 ducats, I am sure you may sell the Carrach for the whole sum and enjoy Lucretia and the Graces for nothing.' It is the comment of a seasoned trader. The passage continued, demonstrating how close Hamilton was to a financial cliff:

> If I do make the purchase, I must draw upon you at once for the money for I have worse than nothing in Ross's hands owing to the great arrear of the Civil List. . . I expect you will get up when the Civil List is before the House and urge the necessity of paying the King's debts, or as much as will prevent foreign ministers

[593] For details of the sales, see O.E. Deutsch, 'Sir William Hamilton's Picture Gallery', *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs'*, 82, 479, February 1943, p. 36.
[594] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, pp. 270–274.
[595] BM Egerton MSS 2635, f 26.

> from being drove [sic] to expose themselves abroad.[596] Without a joke, something very good might be said on the subject.[597]

A further major cause of Hamilton's expenditure beyond his means was his lavish lifestyle.[598] His extensive library was discussed earlier. Furthermore, he purchased the latest scientific equipment related to his volcanic research. He was generous to his friends and, following convention, gave many gifts to individuals and institutions within the Republic of Letters, as discussed below. The Envoy was responsible for providing his own accommodation and Hamilton chose to have three separate residences: the spacious Palazzo Sessa, which acted as the British Embassy; the Villa Angelica, from which Vesuvius might be viewed; and a small coastal residence at Pausilippo.[599] Each was rented and required servants and maintenance. That the Hamiltons were hospitable hosts was attested by innumerable guests. Dr Charles Burney (1726–1814) was a typical example. While he was in Naples collecting material for his *General History of Music*, the Hamiltons entertained him on several occasions:

> After dinner we had music and chat till supper. Mr Hamilton has two pages who play very well on the fiddle and the other on the violoncello. A field bed was put up on the occasion. [Burney stayed the night] As soon as it was dark our musical entertainment was mixed with the sight and observations of Vesuvius, then very busy.[600]

Over the years, entertainment expenses must have been substantial. Not only did English Grand Tourists and foreign dignitaries require hospitality, but even His Imperial Majesty Joseph II (1741–1790), Emperor of Austria, was a guest, and presumably was elaborately treated.

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[596] Charles Greville was MP for Warwick at the time.
[597] Morrison, Letter 40, Hamilton to Charles Greville, Naples, 20 12 1774.
[598] Examples are to be found at : Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton*, pp. 46–51 and Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes*, pp. 14–15.
[599] Knight, 'Sir William Hamilton's Neapolitan Houses'.
[600] H.E. Poole, ed., *Dr Charles Burney: Music, Men and Manners in France and Italy* (Folio Books), London, 1969, pp. 176–177.

Hamilton was besieged with requests from friends, and from more distant contacts, to acquire items for cabinets of curiosities and even furniture. As early as September 1766 Lord Montstuart requested that Hamilton obtain a collection of Mediterranean shells for him, in a letter thanking Hamilton for the gift of an antique ring. Hamilton was tardy in fulfilling this commission and Montstuart repeated it in a letter dated November 1767.[601] The Envoy was also used as a purchasing agent. Lady Holland wrote to him in June 1767 regarding 'The tables you undertook to get for me. They were to be of Sicilian agate.'[602] Such requests were ongoing throughout Hamilton's life in Naples and many were financial transactions, although Hamilton's profit margins are not clear. The Earl of Pembroke, for example, wrote a friendly letter to Hamilton including the sentence 'I write by this post to order the payment of £22. 12s 6d. to Messer's Ross and Gray. Many thanks to you.'[603] Other contacts sought to buy books through him, especially *Le Antichità di ercolano esposte*.[604] Yet the Envoy also made many gifts. Horace Walpole, then creating the eccentric house at Strawberry Hill, was ecstatic when Hamilton provided four packing crates of antiquities. 'I found the crates arrived. . . I cannot describe how agreeable it is to find their contents beyond my expectation.'[605] Such flattering observations abound in Hamilton's correspondence. There is evidence that he employed an agent to assist, as he could not have attended to the myriad requests personally. Throughout Hamilton's years in Naples his demanding nephew, Charles Greville, made constant requests to Hamilton to obtain specimens which he wanted for his mineral and fossil collection. Hamilton rallied to his aid:

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[601] Morrison, Letter 9, Lord Montstuart to William Hamilton, Luton, 04 09 1776.
Ibid. Letter 11, Lord Montstuart to Hamilton, Luton 27 11 1767.
[602] Ibid. Letter 10, Lady Holland to Hamilton, 20 06 1767, address given as 'H. House'.
[603] Ibid. Letter 34, Earl of Pembroke to Hamilton, Wilton House, 18 04 1774.
[604] Ibid. Letter 16, Lord Bruce to Hamilton, London, 18 03 1768.
[605] Ibid. Letter 12. Horace Walpole to Hamilton, London, 22 09 1768.

> [December 1787] In short, I found the specimen very extraordinary but [the dealer] asked £50 (£9,000) for it. *I employed my antiquarian to try and get it for me* and I am now in possession of it for eight guineas (£1,800).[606]

There were also gifts on a much grander scale. In 1788 he sent George III 'a colossal head of Augustus of the first-rate Grecian sculpture'.[607] The language is a little confused, presumably meaning that the bust was in a Greek style. On a smaller scale, Piaggio's diary notes of Vesuvian activity were donated to the Royal Society in 1800. During the liaison with Emma Hamilton (née Hart) Hamilton's financial affairs deteriorated further. He doted on her and not only showered her with expensive gifts, but had an apartment made ready for her in the Palazzo Sessa: 'When I left England, I was richer than I am at present', he claimed in June 1790 and no wonder, for the new apartment fitted up as it is now cost me £3000 (£450,000)'. It was considerably more than his annual stipend.'[608]

Some antiquities in Hamilton's possession may have been gifts from King Ferdinand, such as those on which Goethe commented when visiting what Hamilton termed 'his secret lumber-vault of art':[609]

> Seeing a long box on the floor with the lid partly opened, I had the curiosity to push it back and behold! Two splendid bronze candelabra. . . in a whisper I asked [Philip Hackert, (1737-1807)] if they did not look exactly like those at the Portici Museum. In reply he signalled for me to hold my tongue as it was no doubt possible that they might have strayed hither from the vaults at Pompeii.[610]

The elite in the field of good taste and excellent judgement recognised Hamilton as a doyen of connoisseurship. As early as November 1767 he was used as a source for collectables, sometimes as gifts, but often as commercial arrangements. The nature of

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[606] Morrison, Letter 171, Hamilton to Charles Greville, Naples, 17 12 1787.
[607] BM. Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities. Hamilton Papers, 1-3.
[608] Morrison, Letter 182, Hamilton to Charles Greville, Naples, 18 12 1787.
[609] Fothergill, *Sciences of Antiquity*, p. 180.
[610] Wolfgang Goethe, *Goethe's Travels in Italy*, A. Morris and C. Nisbet, trans. (London, 1892), p. 320.

the request made by Lord Montstuart could be paralleled many times. On this occasion, Hamilton was to be remunerated:

> I am sure you are persuaded of my great regard for you amidst all my indolence. . . I beg you will tell me what progress you have made in the collections of shells you promised to make for me. . . I had the misfortune to mislay your letter, I beg you would let me know again what I am indebted to you.[611]

Hamilton sailed close to the wind in legal matters, perhaps relying on his excellent relations with the Neapolitan Court in so doing. His clandestine opening of the Trebbia Tomb and his plundering of prize vases for his own collection remains the best example. Initially at least, Hamilton had attempted to export artefacts legally, requesting leave from Tanucci to export some antique coins. The reply, delivered on the same day, was negative. Hamilton was curtly advised that there were existing laws against exporting antiquities and Hamilton's request was declined accordingly.[612] A law had been passed in 1755 expressly forbidding their export, which was re-enacted in 1766 and again in 1769. Yet Hamilton appeared oblivious of the law and flouted it conspicuously (*Figure 12.1*). He went so far as to allow Hancarville to have the looted tomb engraved in *AEGR*. [613]

Through trading, Hamilton maintained some kind of financial equilibrium. His correspondence with Charles Greville illustrates his lack of financial understanding and dependence on his nephew's knowledge of the intricacies of banking:

> Having wrote to you so lately, my dear Charles, I have only in answer to yours of 11th March to send you back the bond signed by me. I do not understand business, but it appears by being the named first in the bond as if I was the principal and you my joint security; however, I trust to your well-known probity to secure me against all accidents as far as you can. [614]

[611] John Stuart, 1st Marquis of Bute, was styled 'Lord Mountstuart', 1744–1792. See Morrison, Letter 11, Lord Montstuart to Hamilton, London, 29 11 1767.
[612] Ramage, 'Sir William Hamilton as Collector', pp. 471–472.
[613] Hancarville, *AEGR,* Vol. II, p. 57.
[614] Morrison, Letter 149, Sir William Hamilton to Charles Greville, Naples, 25 04 1786.

His esteem as expert and trader is made clear in this letter from his friend the 'Earl Bishop', Frederick Hervey (1730–1803). They had known each other since their Westminster School days:

> You have had too much trouble about my picture already, which under your auspices cannot but prove a good one, to make it reasonable in me to give you any more (commissions) and therefore if Passeri does not accept the £35 (£6,500), pay him forty and draw upon me at Mr Jenkins for that sum [July 1778]. [615]

Without Hamilton's insatiable collecting, important major items from antiquity, now in Britain, would have gone elsewhere. The most famous of these was his purchase of the Warwick and Portland vases. The substantial profit he made on the sale of the Portland Vase can be demonstrated, but there must have been many such additions to his income through the sales of less remarkable items. The Warwick Vase was one of the major antiquities that passed through Hamilton's hands. Fragments of it had been discovered in the gardens of Hadrian's Villa in Tivoli in 1771. William Hamilton purchased the excavated remains of the enormous stone vase, together with accoutrements, from Gavin Hamilton (1723–1798). He was unrelated to the Envoy, but was an established painter and archaeologist based in Rome. Once the vases were in the Envoy's possession, he had them 'restored' to suit eighteenth-century Neoclassical taste. Writing to Greville, he commented:

> [The] great vase of which you had the drawing, but tho' I offered it [the Pope] for £500 (£70,000) he did not take it, it is only now on the point of being finished and is far beyond any monument of its kind at Rome, it has cost me near £300 (£50,000). I was obliged to cut a block of marble at Carrera to repair it, which has been hollowed out & the fragments fixed on it, by which means the vase is as firm & entire as the day it was made.[616]

Giovani Piranesi (1720–1788) was consulted and he offered this opinion: he approved much of the restoration but thought 'The female mask copied from that in

[615] Morrison, Letter 83, Earl of Bristol to Hamilton, Rome, 17 07 1783.
[616] Ibid. Letter 53, Hamilton to Greville, Naples, 05 06 1775.

Piranesi's candelabro' ought to be a little retouched to give more squareness and character [More detail of sculptural adjustments follow in the letter].[617]

Such was the perceived importance of the object that Piranesi made a series of engravings of it and dedicated the first print to the Envoy. Hamilton had no intention of keeping the vase and hoped to make a profit from it. He did his best to sell it, asking for £500 (£70,000) against the £300 (£48,000) its restoration had cost him. Using Charles Greville as agent, he approached the British Museum, who declined it. Eventually it was sold to Greville's older brother, the Earl of Warwick. Hamilton felt that it was worth more: 'I could really get £600 (£95,000) for it in Rome. The Pope wants to keep it, for it is universally avowed to be the first vase in the world'.[618] If the statement is taken at face value, on this occasion the Envoy declined a profit to ensure it was sent to Britain. It is unknown whether Hamilton was remunerated by the Earl of Warwick. The incident is a further example of his networking, as even the Pope was included.

Another of Hamilton's notable purchases, the Portland Vase, is one of the finest examples of Roman cameo glass. In the modern era it had been known since 1601, passing into the Barberini family collection in 1626 and then known as the Barberini Vase.[619] To Hamilton, the purchase of such a celebrated work was irresistible and, at some point between 1778 and 1780, he purchased it for £1000 (£170,000) from James Byres (1733–1817), a Scottish art dealer who had acquired it from the Barberini family. The piece enchanted Hamilton, who 'had no doubt of this being a work of the time of

[617] Jenkins and Sloan, *Vases and Volcanoes*, p. 222. Part of a letter from James Byers to Gavin Hamilton, August 9, 1774, is quoted
[618] Morrison, Letter 61, Hamilton to Charles Greville, Naples, 02 01 1776.
[619] It is mentioned in a letter of 1601. Nicolas Claude Fabri de Peiresc (1580–1637) wrote to Peter Paul Rubens, where it is recorded as in the collection of Cardinal Francesco Maria Del Monte.

Alexander the Great whose ashes were deposited therein after his death'.[620] He brought it to England on his next leave, to sell at a profit. Negotiation was with the assistance of his niece Mary, who acted as interlocuter, while he remained in the background. The vase was sold privately to Margaret Cavendish-Harley (1715–1785), Dowager Duchess of Portland. She paid 1800 guineas (£280,000) for it in 1783, so making Hamilton a handsome profit. Its fame was to be enhanced by the copies which Wedgwood later made from it.

Hamilton failed to realise that he had become a dealer. Writing to Greville, he commented that:

> I am delicate as to the manner of selling, as I should hate to be looked upon as a dealer & as some of my vases and bronzes are so extraordinary I should wish them to be in England; my cameos & intaglios I shall probably soon dispose of, which I shall do in order not to swell my account with Ross too much.[621]

Others perceived Sir William differently. Pryse Lockhart-Gorden's *Personal Memoirs* make caustic observations about Hamilton's trading activities: 'He trafficked in the arts and his hotel [home] was a broker's shop. No one knew the value of a Greek vase or a gem better that the Cavaliere Inglese, or where to place it.'[622] Furthermore, the writer perceived an ugly side to Hamilton's nature: 'He was jealous of all other amateurs and was rather displeased that I would not let him have a superb vase that I had picked up accidentally, at his own price.'[623] The sale of the Portland Vase demonstrated a reluctance on Hamilton's part to acknowledge his role, and he commented that 'there is something in the act of selling which gives a disagreeable sensation. . . I shall at once make what I think a reasonable offer to her Grace'.[624]

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[620] W. Mankowitz, *The Portland Vase and the Wedgwood Copies* (London, 1952), p. 29.
[621] Morrison, Letter 185, Sir William Hamilton to Charles Greville, Naples,21 09 1790.
[622] Pryce Lockhart-Gorden, *Personal Memoirs* (London, 1830), Vol. II, p. 386.
[623] Ibid., Vol. II, p. 387.
[624] Fothergill, *Sciences of Antiquity*, p. 151.

From the examples detailed here, it is clear that Hamilton had a supplementary role as agent and trader, using both roles for financial profit.

Within the mores of the Republic of Letters, members made gifts to each other, a convention which Hamilton followed. Particularly fine antiquities and geological specimens were donated to the London learned societies of which he was a member. There were many smaller gifts, such as *AEGR* Volumes I and II, presented to the University of Cambridge.[625] Overall, these donations would add to Hamilton's reputation as benefactor and scholar. It did not always work as Hamilton intended. He had sent gifts to the British Museum, but felt that they were unappreciated:

> The presents I have made and have further to make to the [British] Museum since I have returned here have, I am sure, cost me near £300, tho' the old dons do not so much as thank me. . . They are delighted with a spider or a shell and send me many thanks for such presents. I do not care; it is the honour of the Hamilton collection that spurs me on [sic]. [626]

Writing at the time of his second vase collection, he told Charles Greville that 'I have a plan in my head as to the disposal of my present collection of vases by which our manufacturers of earthenware may be much benefitted and the vases will most probably be deposited in the B. Museum. I will certainly make no more presents there.'[627]

As well as amassing his own collection and enhancing his own reputation as a scholar and connoisseur, Hamilton helped many others to secure their own place amongst the literati. Lord George Cowper (1738–1789), an antiquities collector with an interest in electricity, requested that Hamilton, now on the Council of the Royal Society, help him become a Fellow. 'I have lately read in the papers of your being appointed one of the Council of the Royal Society and, as I have always been desirous

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[551] Morrison, Letter 19, Lord Bessborough to Hamilton, London, 21 06 1769.
[626] Ibid. Letter 61, Hamilton to Greville Naples, 22 01 1776.
[627] Ibid. Letter 82, Earl of Bristol to Hamilton, Albino, 03 06 1783.

of being a member of it and not knowing who to apply to for it, must beg the favour of you to procure me that honour.'[628] Hamilton did so and Cowper was able to add 'FRS' to his honours. On many occasions Hamilton's correspondence detailed gifts he made, a striking example being a vase sent to Josiah Wedgwood together with some proof copies from *AEGR.* Wedgwood acknowledged the great help he had received from Hamilton: *'*I cannot but feel myself highly flattered by the approbation of so exquisite a judge. . . and the generous patronage and encouragement I have experienced in these pursuits.'[629] It is a further example of Hamilton's networking and building a personal credit with many who might prove useful to him on future occasions. Money was not the sole currency as frequently it was the credit that might be given in terms of personal reputation, a 'cultural currency' heightening the trust that might be given to a benefactor. Such dealing was at its acme in the late sixteenth century, which later gave way to extensive litigation, leading in turn to the growth of binding contracts becoming the norm. Perhaps because Hamilton clung to the old methods of bargaining, there is no evidence in his writings which refer to binding agreements in his business dealings.[630]

Pictorial evidence for collecting antiquities in Naples can be seen in *Figures 1* and *13.2*. *Figure 1* records the domestic scene in the Neapolitan apartment of Lord Fortrose, where vases and the other antiquities he collected are visible. It was painted by Peter Fabris early in Hamilton's Neapolitan career and demonstrates the high culture enjoyed by the upper classes. *Figure 13*.2 is in marked contrast. From the accomplished violinist shown in Fabris's work, Hamilton is viewed here amongst dealers in antiquities. It is an important image offering an insight into Hamilton as

[628] Morrison, Letter 74, Lord Cowper to Hamilton, Florence, 05 01 1777.
[629] Farrer, *Correspondence of Josiah Wedgwood*, Vol. 3. The letter is dated, Etruria, June 1786.
[630] Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (Palgrove Macmillan, London, 1988), pp. 37–59.

both collector and probably trader. A matter of regret is that the painter is unknown. The tall personage sporting a tricorn hat is clearly Sir William Hamilton in late middle age, making it reasonable to suppose that the image dates to the time that he began the second vase collection, *circa* 1785. He appears to be in deep discussion with the person to his left, perhaps his antiquities dealer. It is an example of how Sir William was able to mix in a variety of social settings, even though the gulf between aristocrat and tradesman remained divided by a 'glass floor'. The range of vases for sale shown in the picture is impressive. Close inspection indicates that most are of South Italian origin. Alongside them sculptures and prints for sale can be seen.

This section has demonstrated the complex interaction of Hamilton's activities. An attempt has been made to separate the strands, but they intertwine. At times, he was the connoisseur, offering his readers or audience lofty discourse, but a different facet to his character emerged when he was negotiating the purchase of a choice artefact for a commission and arguing about the purchase price. The handsome profit made on the sale of the Portland Vase was frequently replicated on a smaller scale in the trading he undertook on behalf of others, as Morrison's letters testify. Overall, the aristocratic Envoy Plenipotentiary was chameleon-like, constantly changing his role to suit each occasion, and forever networking, meaning that his contact list ranged through all tiers of European society.

Collections and Dispersals

Hamilton's achievements were all assisted by his position as a minor aristocrat, funded, as has been seen, through his stipend and Catherine Hamilton's income from the lands she owned in Pembrokeshire. Although William Hamilton's income was adequate to support a suitable lifestyle for an envoy plenipotentiary, he could not hope to collect in the same style as the Envoy's rich acquaintances. Thomas Hope

(1769–1830) is a good example of how the monied class collected. HIs family had previously amassed a fortune to which he added by his work as a merchant banker. Hope travelled widely, collecting items of architecture and sculpture as he progressed. Hamilton had cause to be grateful to him, for when he was in a parlous financial state in London after his recall from Naples in 1799, Hope purchased his second vase collection, which was then prominently displayed in Hope's London home in Cavendish Square. Even so, it is Hamilton's first antiquities collection, housed in splendour in the twelfth room in Montague Place, for which Hamilton is primarily remembered. Ian Jenkins wrote of it that:

> Displayed in Montague House and set off by David Allen's commemorative portrait of Sir William's investiture as a Knight of the Bath [*Figure 3*], the Hamiltonian Collection put his name and reputation as an antiquary at the very heart of the national repository.[631]

Although it is commonly known as his first collection of vases, the Museum's acquisition from Sir William consisted of 730 ceramic vessels, 175 terracottas, 300 specimens of ancient glass, 600 bronzes and 6,000 coins. Taking the entire collection into account, the purchase price of £8,410 (£1,200,000) does not seem excessive.[632] Ian Jenkins opines that 'When Sir William's vases arrived in the Museum in 1772 they appeared to his countrymen at least to represent an entirely new class of *virtu,* and one, moreover, which Sir William himself seemed to have discovered.'[633]

Hamilton occupied a central position between those who, like the artist James Barry (1741–1806), subsisted in Rome, and the landed aristocracy, with their fabulous wealth. The latter might collect at leisure, having ample financial resources and with

[631] Jenkins, 'Seeking the Bubble Reputation', p. 192.
[632] Miller, *That Noble Cabinet*, pp. 78–79.
[633] Jenkins Ian, 'Seeking the Bubble Reputation', p. 193.

mansions able to display what they collected.[634] The impoverished Barry, grateful that Hamilton had taken a positive interest in his painting skills, articulated the issue:

> A man whose mind is occupied with studying the antique and the people of the sixteenth century, may be content for a time to give up the profits of his profession. . . The profits in this, as in most other professions, are insuperably linked to and followed by reputation and character which we all have a hankering for.[635]

Hamilton's was the middle path, collecting and, for a period, enjoying his acquisitions before selling them.

The Envoy's position in Naples, a centre for trading in antiquities and fine art, made him a magnet for those on the Grand Tour who, by reputation, knew him to be generous. He was ideally placed to ingratiate himself with the *crème de la crème* of both British and European society. An example is the assistance he gave his distant relative the Duke of Hamilton after the latter had become entangled with a Neapolitan lady:

> I heartily thank you, my dear Sir William, for your goodness and attention to me when I was at Naples. I was dry & you gave me to drink. I was hungry and you fed me, I was in danger and you protected me. . . All was beneficence and humanity (except to boars and quails); if I could find fault, you had rather too great an attention to my health.[636]

The discourse has pointed to Sir William being an extremely complicated individual. He wished to please and be highly regarded both by fellow countrymen and also by a European elite. Thus, he assisted visitors to Naples, tolerated those who wished him to acquire books and artefacts on their behalf, while sending valuable gifts to individuals and organisations in Britain. He sought always to uphold the majesty of the British Crown, even when it involved him in great financial costs, assuming the British

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[634] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 7.
[635] Morrison, Letter 13, James Barry to William Hamilton, Rome, 29 11 1768.
[636] Morrison, Letter 72, Duke of Hamilton to Hamilton, Rome, 15 05 1776.

government would honour such expenses. As an Envoy he always represented his country in the manner he thought the most befitting. This involved ingratiating himself with King Ferdinand, a task that he frequently found disagreeable. The Royal excesses were displayed during a winter hunt lasting a week. A mass of animals had been bred in an extinct, but extremely fertile, volcanic crater. Hamilton recorded that it had been repaired for 'the Grand Duke of Russia' to hunt but, although he had declined, Ferdinand left his royal guest and insisted that Hamilton accompany him:

> He had drove into an enclosure about five miles in circumference about 500 wild boar, 1500 stags and fellow deer, foxes and hares innumerable. . . He stayed a week, shooting every day, before he could demolish the game he had shut up. I was there and indeed I never saw such a number of wild beasts before.[637]

David Constantine observes that 'Typically, Hamilton might regret the waste of time and he thought that hunting as the King practised it was "Carnage rather than sport" but he went along, to serve his own King.'[638] There was an element of patriotism in Hamilton's antiquities collections. He ensured that certain items he acquired were destined for Britain. The best example, namely the sale of his first vase collection to the British Museum, has been discussed. Yet without the financial risk he took by purchasing the Warwick and Barberini Vases, their destination would have been other than Britain.

William Hamilton, the Aesthetic Senses and Camp

Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713), was influential in Hamilton's lifetime and his influence can be found in Hamilton's lifestyle. Shaftesbury felt that there was an innate sense of order and justice within the human psyche, manifest in morality, beauty and religion. His opinion was that 'What is beautiful is

[637] Morrison, Letter 115, Hamilton to Greville, Naples, 26 02 1782.
[638] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, pp. 47–49.

harmonious and *proportionable*; what is harmonious and proportionable, is true; and what is at once both *beautiful* and *true*, is, of consequence, *agreeable* and good.'[639] Such a sentiment was the fundamental to developing aesthetic taste, an opinion which Hamilton clearly followed. There is another element in this complicated issue, for the Envoy was clearly the gentleman amateur seeking the good life through leisure. The word 'leisure' does not imply a life of idleness, but rather to enjoy sufficient personal space to pursue high moral goals. It was the eighteenth-century equivalent of the Latin *otium*, a term with intellectual and virtuous implications. Within it, the gentleman might engage in activities that were artistically valuable or enlightening. It had particular meaning in respect of diplomats, philosophers and poets. Hamilton's influence and renown within eighteenth-century Neoclassicism was the product of his own collecting, publications and connoisseurship, and his ability to network with scholars and the upper echelons of society.

Neoclassicism insisted that art might model the ideal virtues in life, so 'improving' its viewers by its civilising nature. The movement began in Rome with Winckelmann's *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst* ('Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture'), published in 1750. It was influential in establishing Neoclassicism. His argument was that art should strive toward noble simplicity and, to achieve this, imitation of the ancient civilisations of Greece and Rome might act as exemplar material. The work was translated into English in 1765 by the artist Henry Fuseli (1741–1825). A theoretical framework for the emergence of classical beauty was given by J.J. Winckelmann's publications and especially his much famed *Geschichte der Kunst des*

[639] Wolfram Benda et. al., eds., *Selected Letters and Posthumous Writings of Lord Shaftsbury* (Stuttgard-Bad Cannstatt,1981–present). See also Ted Honderich, ed., 'Shaftesbury, Third Earl', Alan Lacey*, Oxford Companion to Philosophy,* p 869.

Alterthums. Readers absorbed much that was subjective and now recognised as inaccurate in his writing. He wrote of Greece as if he were intimate with a bygone age and a country he had never visited. He fantasised about beautiful Greek boys naked in a gymnasium which he had never seen, citing the reason as a favourable climate, which he had never himself experienced. Whitney Davies commented on these difficulties: 'Many contradictions derive from this systematic transposition of subjective erotics – the idea or memory of what is subjectively beautiful and desirable in sexual, ethical and political terms, into objectivising formalist and historicist analysis.'[640] Nevertheless, taking the *Geschichte* in its entirety, the historicist nature of the work overrode the elements derived from Winckelmann's homoerotic nature. Yet although the endeavours and writings of eighteenth-century scholars need careful analysis, they were of the greatest importance in offering a historical and theoretical framework for the Neoclassical movement, even if at times their objectivity can be questioned. Neoclassicism related to the artistic and creative movements that were thought to reflect qualities of ancient Greek and Roman philosophy, culture and art.

The period 1750 to 1770 was one where the focus on ancient Greece and its arts heightened. Winckelmann was extremely influential, placing ancient Greece on a pedestal, while Stewart and Revett's *The Antiquities of Athens and Other Monuments of Greece* (1762) offered readers tantalising images of the glory that had been ancient Greece. Alongside these publications, the ongoing excavations around Naples provided artefacts that were perceived as having clean lines with a restrained style. J.J. Winckelmann's attraction to them was, in part, because their imagery was frequently from the period where he perceived artistic excellence to be at its apogee. He gave a theoretical framework for the emergence of classical beauty. What was

[640] Donald Prezioso, (Ed.), *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998), p. 41.

unknown at that time was that Greek and Roman sculptural art was gaudily coloured, thereby transmuting ancient reality into a trope of cold ungarnished marble, and so misconceiving an important element of ancient art. Nevertheless, vases from Greece and Magna Graecia often emerged from tombs, 'sepulchres' as Hamilton termed them, still with the bright imagery not imagined by contemporaries to have adorned temples and sculpture as well.

Such publications and excavations drew Hamilton towards the collection of ancient vases, with painted vessels offering an actual window into the art and daily life of the ancients. It was important that these artefacts should be Greek and not Etruscan, melding into the contemporary enthusiasm for ancient Greece. The clay from which they were made became the canvas for an ancient art gallery and reinterpreted as such in *AEGR*. Classicising imagery went much further. Its forms, so different from the Baroque, were reflected in architecture and the arts of the Neoclassical age. Contemporary artists, architects and writers adopted specific elements which evoked classical antiquity. Although such imagery purported to refer to the art forms of ancient Greece and Rome, it will be shown that it was subtly developed into a contemporary formulation, espousing Enlightenment principles of order and reason – in other words, Neoclassical.[641]

Grand Tourists would acquire specimens from Greek and Roman antiquity together with reproduction prints 'after the antique', focussing on antiquity, such of those by Piranesi, and fine art illustrating classical themes. Many antiquities left the Naples area and found their way to Northern Europe, not least Britain. It was a time when the nascent United States of America was developing fast, with many buildings in the Neoclassical style erected, as was also the case in British colonies in the West Indies.

[641] These are manifest in books such as J.J. Winckelmann's *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* and also Hancarville, *AEGR,* Vol. II, plate 22.

They offered a sense of historical continuity to the emerging nations populated by European immigrants.[642] Wedgwood exported significant quantities of ceramics to these destinations, some of the Neoclassical imagery upon them ultimately derived from Hamilton's publications. A large reservoir of classical myth and actual sculpture fired the muse of painters and sculptors during the long eighteenth century, with Hamilton's influence remaining profound in this regard.

Yet Neoclassicism cannot be regarded as gaining universal acceptance. In Chapter Two it was noted how some contemporaries regarded it as too clinical and cold, an opinion which grew with the birth and rapid growth of the Romantic movement, traces of which are visible within a Neoclassical context. *Figure 23.1* shows a candle holder. The images on it are classical, but its ruined form implies a sympathy with a lost civilisation, the artefacts from which were now emerging from Herculaneum and Pompeii. Overall, actual artefacts from antiquity were to be translated by Wedgwood and his like into the cultural and aesthetic mainstream of the eighteenth century.

Although Hamilton was explicit in his desire that vases should be adjuncts to design improvement, he lacked the philosophical ability to analyse such thoughts as profoundly as Hancarville and, more significantly, Sir Joshua Reynolds. Many of the lectures Reynolds gave students at the Academy's annual prize giving were recorded and included important and revealing thought on the use of ancient art. Compare two passages, the first by Hancarville, the second by Sir Joshua Reynolds. In the Preface to Volume I of *AEGR* Hancarville wrote:

> Moreover the ideas which are dispersed throughout this book will always serve to show young Artists that it is not by keeping themselves servilely attached to the methods of their Masters; nor even by imitating those who surpass them,

[642] N. Mckendrick, 'Josiah Wedgwood: An Eighteenth-Century Entrepreneur in Salesmanship and Marketing Techniques', *The Economic History Review* 12, 3, February 2008, pp. 408–433.

> that they can rise above mediocrity, but that it is by elevating themselves to the constituent principles of the Art itself, by penetrating to the very source from whence these principles flow, that is the philosophical contemplation of the nature of things, by putting themselves in the place of the inventors, to flee from thence as from a height all the steps art has made down to our time, that they can arrive at such a degree of knowledge as to be able to enlarge the narrow bounds which, without genius, cannot be paralleled.[643]

Hancarville's style is always verbose, but Sir Joshua Reynolds was to deepen the sentiment more succinctly:

> We come now to speak of another kind of imitation; the borrowing a particular thought, an action, attitude, or figure, and transplanting it into your own work: this will either come under the charge of plagiarism, or be warrantable, and deserve commendation, according to the address with which it is performed. There is some difference likewise whether it is upon the ancients or the moderns that these depredations are made. It is generally allowed that no man need be ashamed of copying the ancients: their works are considered as a magazine of common property, always open to the public, whence every man has a right to what materials he pleases; and if he has the art of using them, they are supposed to become to all intents and purposes his own property.[644]

The attitude to the Grecian originals is shown to be that of respect, not veneration. Matthew Boulton adequately expressed his attitude in a letter to a Mrs Montague: 'Ye present age distinguishes itself by adopting the most Elegant ornaments of the most refined Grecian artists. I am satisfied in conforming thereto and humbly copying their style *& making new ornaments*.'[645]

From this it becomes clear that, while there was an admiration for ancient art, it was not to be treated as sacrosanct, and artists were encouraged to use and develop it. In the mid-eighteenth century access to actual Greek vases was not easy. Hancarville, in his preface to *AEGR*, describes vases in private collections as remaining buried in cabinets', indicating that their state was little better than before excavation,

[643] Hancarville, *AEGR,* Vol. I, Preface, p. xvi.
[644] Joshua Reynolds, *Seven Discourses delivered in the Royal Academy by the President*. Lecture 6, 1774.
[645] Quoted in Coltman, *Fabricating the Antique*, p. 78. Author's italics.

while the publication of Hamilton's collection made them 'as visible to the artist as if he had them in his own collection'. Hancarville was explicit:

> We think also that we make an agreeable present to our Manufacturers of earthen ware and China, and to those who make vases in silver, copper, glass, marble etc. Having employed much more time in working than in reflexion, and being besides in great want of models , they will be very glad to find here more than two hundred forms, the greatest part of which, are absolutely new to them; then as now as in a plentiful stream, they may draw ideas which their ability and taste will know how to improve to their advantage, and to that of the Public.[646]

Horace Walpole refused to accept that developing an image was plagiarism when he wrote that '[Reynolds] has been accused of plagiarism from having borrowed attitudes from ancient masters . . . When a single posture is imitated from a historical picture and applied to a portrait in a different dress with new attributes, this is not plagiarism but quotation.'[647]

In *AEGR* some vases were drawn as if from an architect's design which included minutely detailed references to size and shape (*Figure 16.5*). Most were coloured images derived from both the Red and Black figure styles of Greek vase painting, but in *AEGR* it was expressed in a two-dimensional form frequently unrelated to the shape of the original vessel. Furthermore, some of them were represented as tondos, rather than being portrayed by the image on the vase itself.[648] Rarely was the total imagery on a vase offered, but rather images were extracted from it (See *Figure 23.2*). Furthermore, they were attenuated from actual vase paintings, modified and given a 'Greek style' border (*Figure 22.3*). Images point back to specific vases, with significant changes made by the engraver before they reached the eye of the public. Frequently, single images featured which were surrounded by a border replete with Greek filling ornament which was not germane to the original vase.

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[646] Hancarville, *AEGR*, Vol. I, Introduction, p. xviii.
[647] Coltman, *Fabricating the Antique,* p. 72.
[648] See *AEGR*, Vol. I., plates 90 and 117.

Walpole is correct in terming such vases as a 'quotation'. Many of *AEGR's* Images are themselves beautiful but are not accurate drawings of a single vase; rather they become an altogether more sophisticated artwork. The tendency to produce drawings for others to develop was manifest in Hamilton's second vase publication, *CEAV*, where only the simple line drawings were offered without any accompanying vase shapes by which to contextualise them. As such, they might easily be used in completely different contexts. The original shape of the vase was impossible to reconstruct from the images offered. The conclusion must be that the vases engraved in Hancarville's and Hamilton's publications are for the most part attractive designs which, although based on original vases, are themselves 'quotations' and ripe for further artistic development.

The thesis has, to this point, perceived Neoclassicism as the antithesis of the Rococo, with the clear sharp outlines of Neoclassical design set against its florid predecessor. It has been stressed that a major aim of Hamilton was to improve design, to which end he argued that the images contained in *AEGR* and *CEAV* might be used in order to reach Winckelmann's ideal of 'noble simplicity and quiet grandeur'.[649] Yet this aspiration should be set against a more sensual aspect of Neapolitan life in which the Envoy and others of his class participated. There is a danger of using the Enlightenment as an all-embracing term, assuming that it encompassed all aspects of life, which it did not. Take, for example, the lavish balls and entertainments, which were part and parcel of Hamilton's routine. There is the example of the extravagant expenditure to prepare Catherine Hamilton for the marriage of King Ferdinand and Queen Maria Carolina, referring to the 'Illuminations,

[649] J.J. Winkelmann, *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst*, ('Thoughts about imitating Greek works in painting and sculpture'), p.35

masquerades balls etc' in addition to prodigious expenditure on jewellery.[650] Early in Hamilton's Naples career evening dress for women would be the ladies' voluminous skirts, which required a solid framework to support them, crowned with towering coiffeurs. The ballrooms remained in the Rococo style.

Aspects of Hamilton's lifestyle come within the modern concept of camp.[651] Camp has evolved from a meaning that related solely to homoerotic male behaviour to a wider definition. If Neoclassicism was aesthetic and ethical, camp was its opposite, involving exaggeration and excess. Unlike Neoclassicism it ignores virtuous conduct and makes no claim to timelessness. Camp is notoriously hard to define, but Allan Penrose assists by his observations that 'Camp is so difficult to define because it is much like judging beauty. Camp lies partially in the eye of the beholder.'[652] It can also be understood by characteristics such as silliness, extravagance, ridiculous or affected behaviour, terms that might be applied to various aspects of the long eighteenth century life in some social circles.[653]

J.J. Winckelmann barely disguises camp behind his desire for 'noble simplicity', which is itself at odds with his sensual descriptions with their camp inflexions: 'So overt and clinically detailed are his description of eroticised body parts, from the full buttocks of a Bacchus to the contours of the nipples on a male torso.'[654] Even his murder at the hands of Francesco Arcangeli in a lodging house in Trieste fits the mould of exaggeration and excess. The German emphasised that Neoclassical art might only be considered great if it copied the ancients. This, too, might also be

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[650] BM Egerton MSS 2635, f.26 .
[651] Ersy Contogouris, 'Neoclassicism and Camp in Sir William Hamilton's Naples', *AOB Interactive Journal for Women in the Arts, 1640-1830,* 9, 1, 2019, pp. 1–19.
[652] Mehl Allan Penrose, *Masculinity and Queer Desire in Spanish Enlightenment Literature* (Routledge, 2016), p. 83.
[653] Ula Klein and Emily Kugler, 'Introduction to Eighteenth-Century Camp', *Interactive Journal for Women in the Arts*, 9, 2, 2019.
[654] Alice Kuzniar, ed., *Outing Goethe and his Age* (Stanford University Press, Standofd, 1996), p. 11.

considered moving towards camp, as it was surely an extreme overstatement in itself. In the context of visitors to Naples a continuum might be imagined. In London erotic dances could be viewed and brothels visited, while In Naples suggestive images from antiquity were frequent. In terms of understanding ancient imagery, a visitor's association with the Envoy might merge culture with aspects of camp.

Contact with Lady Emma Hamilton tended to merge the Neoclassical with elements of camp and a frisson of erotica. Her notorious past was well known, and she was a trained performance artist using skills gained from her early years in London. Her repertoire had extended to more subtle modes as she performed in Dr Graham's 'Temple of Health', dancing in the flimsiest of attire around the 'Celestial Bed' designed to awake sensuality in childless couples.[655] She took her talents to Naples, charming Hamilton's guests with her *tableau vivant* or 'Attitudes', as she termed them. This form of mime was not unique to her: 'Many elite women exploited this role acting as impresarios in their own households.'[656] In Emma's case, sensuality was an essential element, which can be seen in the many portraits of her in similar poses to her Attitudes. (*Figure 28.3*). Goethe's encomium on Emma's performance offers further evidence. Here the female body is reduced to an artefact:

> The old Knight has had made for her a Greek costume, which becomes her extremely. Dressed in this and letting her hair loose and taking a couple of shawls, she exhibits every possible variety of posture, expressions and looks, so that at last the spectator almost fancies in a dream. One beholds here in perfection, in movement, in ravishing variety, all that the greatest of artists have rejoiced to be able to reproduce. . . . Grave or sad, playful, exulting, repentant, wanton, menacing, anxious – all mental states follow rapidly one after another. . . . The old knight holds the light for her and enters into the exhibition with his whole soul. He thinks that he can discern in her a resemblance to all the most famous antiques, all the beautiful profiles on the Sicilian coins, say, of the Apollo Belvedere itself [657]

[655] Colville and Williams, *Emma Hamilton*, p. 53.
[656] Idid., p. 140.
[657] Goethe, *Italian Journey 1786-1768*.

Horace Walpole was a sterner judge, commenting that his own wife would not be exposed in such a manner. He questioned Emma's Neoclassical credentials, writing that 'I have not seen her yet, so am no judge, but people are mad about her wonderful expressions which I do not conceive; so few antique statues having any expression at all , not being designed to have it.'[658] In the modern world, the viewer is left with a false impression of the Attitudes. Frederich Rehberg's (1758–1835) images of Emma's Attitudes (*Figure 28.1*) are drawn strictly in accordance with Neoclassical principles, at variance with the actual event. Goethe's description implies an emotional, even sensual content.[659] Rehberg, by eliminating the sensual, produced the unintended consequence of opening social doors which aided Emma's acceptability after she became Lady Hamilton. A further strand of camp in Hamilton's life was the excessive number of paintings and sculpture he commissioned of Emma. In a letter to Greville she recounted the scene:

> Sir William is very fond of me and very kind to me. The house is ful of painters painting me. Marchant is cutting my head in stone, that is in cameo for a ring. There is another man modelling me in wax and another in clay. All the artists is come from Rome to study from me, that Sir William as fitted up a room that is called the painting-room. Sir William's never a moment from me. He goes nowhere without me. He has no diners but where I can be of the party. . . . I now live in the upstairs apartments where he lives [sic].[660]

Emma's role within Neoclassicism was ambivalent. The great number of portraits of her, distributed so widely around Europe, forced a public engagement with her pseudo-classical poses. At one level they may be viewed as suitable within the Neoclassical era in that she is frequently represented in scenes from classical myth, many being inspired by her representation of images on Hamilton's vases. Even so,

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[658] W.S. Lewis and D. Wallace, *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence* (Yale University Press, 1937–83), Volume XI, p. 338.
[659] Goethe's description included descriptions of Emma such as 'Serious, sad, pitiful, contrite, ecstatic alluring'.
[660] Morrison, Letter 168, Emma Hart to Charles Greville, Naples, 04 08 1783.

the images have a frisson of eroticism about them as she appears in clinging dresses and a 'come hither' smile (*Figure 28.3*). At one level Emma was Hamilton's idealised classical model and he ensured reproductions of her were made in many forms. As with the Meidias Vase, Emma's image could be adapted. The artist Alexander Day (1751–1841) thanked Hamilton for 'Leaving Lady Hamilton's portrait with me. I have had the inexpressible pleasure of copying it in a variety of ways'.[661] Fredrich Rehberg's images were widely distributed, further scattering Neoclassical imagery based on Emma (See *Figure 30.4, left*). Her portrait, hung on so many walls, would in turn bring Sir William to mind, although some would perceive him in an unfavourable light, particularly in the last decade of the eighteenth century. Overall, there was little attempt to portray Emma in a strictly Neoclassical mode. Within the proliferation of Emma's portraits, she is alluring and sensual, even if most of her imagery can be viewed within the framework of the Neoclassical. Taking Hamilton's finances into account, it was surely excessive to have her representation repeated time after time, a further demonstration of his fixation with her.

Hamilton sometimes acted in an overtly camp and homoerotic manner, noted by his biographers but not developed. A spectacle that he gave his visitors was that of boys cavorting in the sea outside his villa at Posillipo. It was a sensual treat. These adolescents were *lazzaroni* who pranced naked in the sea, diving for small change that Hamilton and his guests, male and female, threw for them. Goethe described the scene:

> I visited Sir William in his Posillipo villa. . . There is no more glorious place in the whole world. After lunch, a dozen boys went swimming in the sea. It was beautiful to watch the groups they made and the postures they took during their games. Sir William pays them to give him this pleasure every afternoon.[662]

[661] Quoted in Coltman, *Fabricating the Antique*, p. 67.
[662] Goethe, *Italian Journey 1786-1768*, p. 353.

Even more bizarre were the antics of Hamilton, his page boys and Jack the monkey, his pet. Each morning one of Hamilton's pages swam naked with the Envoy and his monkey. Hamilton recorded that 'Jack never bites him, but plays all sorts of tricks, his favourite one is to pull him by his [genitals].'[663] Esmy Contgouris links the activity with Grand Tourists using impoverished *lazzaroni* teenagers as prostitutes. As will be seen in Chapter Six, there was an ongoing phallic humour between Hamilton and others of his social class.

Many images in the publications of Hamilton's vase collections may be interpreted as camp. Voyeurs might gaze on the plates, particularly in *AEGR*, of the many images of the nude male, sometimes in ithyphallic mode and occasionally interacting with their female and male counterparts. Hamilton drew attention to the developing prudery towards the end of the eighteenth century. In the introduction to *CEAV* he described how he removed secondary painted drapery to reveal a nude figure.

> A Vase in my first Collection in the British Museum representing a Bacchanalian subject, was published by Passeri before it came into my possession. The learned Antiquarian has displayed in his Dissertation on that Vase much of his erudition to explain the reason why a Silenus was represented there completely clothed and not naked as in most monuments of Antiquity. When that Vase came into my possession, having purchased the whole Collection, I soon perceived, that the drapery on the Silenus had been added with a pen and ink as was the case on the figures of many other vases in the same collection, the late possessor being very devout having caused all the nudities to be cover'd. As soon as the vase was mine, a sponge washed off the modern drapery and Passeri's learned dissertation. [664].

The conclusion to this section must be that the surviving documentation, although undoubtedly emphasising the Neoclassicism of the age can also, if probed a little deeper, find another culture, more emotional and sometimes queer, which might indeed be termed camp.

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[663] Fothergill, *Sciences of Antiquity*, p. 119.
[664] William Hamilton, *CEAV*, Vol. 1, p. 12.

The Meidias Hydria, A Case Study

Many of Hamilton's vases have interesting reception histories, but the vessel analysed here is unique in that its avatar can be traced well into the nineteenth century and beyond. It is an excellent example of Kalkarnis's argument that:

> Artistic interpretation is what initially created the link between reception and aesthetic value; between how the ancient cultures came to be isolated and dislocated from its original context for the purposes of aesthetic pleasure and art historical narratives.[665]

Furthermore, it was the vase that Hamilton chose to have beside him when Sir Joshua Reynolds painted his portrait in 1777. How the Meidias Hydria came into Hamilton's possession is unknown, but the probability is that it formed part of one of the large aristocratic collections purchased by him soon after his arrival in Naples. It is chosen for detailed analysis here because of the wide publicity it received throughout the period 1770–1850, so allowing an investigation of its reception within this time frame, together with its publication history. It poses the question, 'If there is more than one story to be told, if meanings are contested, which meaning should we accept?' [666] Commentators of the long eighteenth century demonstrated both the intrinsic worth of the vase, the use made of the four plates dedicated to it in *AEGR* and how images from the vase reflected the changing values of the period. Although arguably the most famous Greek vase from the eighteenth century, it is currently positioned modestly in the British Museum, to be found in a gallery behind

[665] Emmanouil Kalkanis, 'The "Meidias" Hydria: A Visual and Textual Journey of a Greek Vase in the History of Art of Antiquity 1770–1840', 2013, p. 487. https://arthistoriography.files.wordpress.com/2013/12/kalkanis.pdf (Accessed 03 02 2020).

[666] K. Malik, 'How Do We Make Sense of Art When We Have Different Ways of Seeing?' *Observer*, March 4, 2018.

the Nereid Monument. The label on it states simply that it is a hydria from Athens and notes that it is 'From the Hamilton collection'.

The vase shows a skill and delicacy rarely matched by other painters, even though the most famous twentieth-century commentator, Sir John Beazley (1885–1970), perceived it as overly decorated.[667] Nevertheless, a special study of this artefact leads to a greater understanding of the relationship between the artists of the eighteenth century and artefacts from antiquity. Although Hamilton played only the patron's role in the actual production of *AEGR*, he demonstrated a keen interest in the project and it is his name that has continued to be associated with this vessel.

The function of a hydria was, as its name suggests, to carry water. A frequent scene on figured hydriai is of women filling these vessels at the fountain house. Hydriai have three handles, two for lifting and a third for pouring the water. The Meidias Hydria is surely for display, for the owner would not risk such an exquisite piece being damaged. It is the painter's name-vase, a late Red Figure vessel, made in Athens and exported to Magna Graecia.[668] Potters and their artists were not highly regarded in ancient Greece. Higher status was afforded to those who painted on panels. These have vanished, but there is a possibility that the humble potters may have attempted to copy them. Sir John Beazley described the pottery painters' status:

> In the age of Polygnotos the *artist* begins to disengage himself from his fellow craftsmen; until now the team ran abreast, but now the first-string forges ahead and distances the pace-makers. As long as painting meant line drawing coloured in, the vase painter felt himself the painter's brother; when painting ceases to be that, the man who draws outlines on pots becomes a humbler, more mechanical person.[669]

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[667] Sir John Beazley, perhaps the world's most famous expert on ancient Greek pottery, was Professor of Classical Archaeology and Art at the University of Oxford from 1925 to 1956.
[668] The term 'name vase' is a modern term used to denote the finest work known from a given vase painter. In this case, Meidias signed the vase as his own work.
[669] Quoted in T. Rasmussen and N. Spivey, *Looking at Greek Vases* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991), p. 117.

The Meidias vase portrays the Dioscouroi, Castor and Pollux, in the act of abducting the daughters of Leucippus from a sanctuary. Helera is already in Pollux's chariot, which races past a statue of a goddess, itself an act of sacrilege. Eriphyle is in Castor's arms and his chariot awaits them. The lower frieze (*Figure 20.1*) illustrates the Garden of the Hesperides, owned by Hera. By tradition, it was placed in the extreme west of the Greek world. In its orchard, apple trees grew with golden fruit granting immortality when eaten. Herakles is shown seated on a lion skin. The imagery is overtly sensual, with the lower panel sometimes claimed to represent an Athenian concept of Heaven (*Figure 20.3*).[670]

Winckelmann enthused about the vase. 'Raphaelesque' engraving nullified the action-filled upper band of the vase itself, instead making the xoanon of a goddess the focal point and repositioning the chariots geometrically to either side of her. The outcome is a triumph within the realm of purist Neoclassicism. Even so, by no means does it represent the Meidias Painter's vivid construction of confusion and drama, appropriate to a scene of violent abduction. The images in *AEGR* should be understood as distinct works of art, loosely adapted from the Meidias vase. Inspired by ancient genius, the engravings of it were a clear demonstration of how images, millennia old, might be used as contemporary artists wished. It is difficult to accept the opinion of Winckelmann and Hancarville that Raphael had been strongly influenced by Greek vases (*Figure 20.3*).

By the final decade of the eighteenth century, Hamilton, now a scholar in his own right, became sceptical of this theory. It demonstrated how his knowledge had grown since his patronage of *AEGR,* a quarter of a century earlier:

[670] For a full description see that of the British Museum: http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=399269&partId=1 (Accessed 02 12 2019).

> It is not to be imagined that Artists of the very first class were employed by Potters to make the drawings on these vases, and yet on some of them, the outline is so perfect and the composition of the figures so easy, elegant and graceful, that I doubt if Raphael himself, under the same circumstances would have executed them better.[671]

Note that Hamilton's observation made no direct link between the ancient vases and Raphael's copying them; rather, there was an observation about the skill of vase painters and the Renaissance artist. It is possible that Raphael might have seen a few examples of Greek vases in contemporary cabinets of curiosities, but few of them could compare with the quality of the Meidias Hydria. It was surely eisegesis for Hamilton's early mentors to assume more. It must not be forgotten that *AEGR* Volume I, Plate 129 further added to the vase's fame (*Figure 23.2*).

Elements of the Meidias Hydria were illustrated four times in *AEGR*, but without a representation of the entire vase.[672] It was Plate 22 of Volume II that offered a double fold-out measuring 81cm x 44 cm, using it to construct an imaginary Raphael painting (*Figure 20.3*). The aim of the engraver, Laurant Pécheux (1729–1821), the artist given the task of reworking the image, was to demonstrate how it might be used as a model for further artistic development, by adding to and manoeuvring the figures within it. No doubt Hamilton approved of his work, as it was fine exemplar material for his desire for *AEGR* to be developed further by contemporary artists. In the composition of the abduction scene white gouache was laid on the draperies of the figures, so that they appeared in sharp relief. Also, the front figures on the scene on the shoulder are highlighted in lead white. Likewise, the picture's composition had been altered to a great extent, with removals and additions in order to offer a

[671] Hamilton, *CEAV*, Vol. I, p. 34.
[672] Hancarville, *AEGR*, Vol. I, plates 127, 128 and 129. They form '"mythological" extracts' from the imagery of the vases. Vol. II, plate 22 is a four-page spread showing Pécheux's reimaging of a scene from the vase 'in the manner of Raphael'.

Renaissance style coherence to the whole. There was also foreshortening of the frontal figures together with an obvious vanishing point.[673]

There was a mystique about ancient vases amongst the artists of Northern Europe where, until the age of the public museum, the artefacts had remained largely unknown. The Scottish painter James Clark (c.1745–1800), who travelled to Italy in the mid-eighteenth century, was clearly enthralled by them:

> I have dealt pretty considerably in Etruscan art, [i.e. vases]. . . acknowledged by antiquarians to be the most ancient monuments of the Fine Arts that now exist. The subjects represented upon some of them exhibit certain religious Rites of the ancient Greeks. . . Mythology, and more particularly of the Eleusinian Mysteries, which neither the Paintings of Herculaneum nor even Antique Sculpture have been hitherto handed down to us.[674]

If this general statement is applied to the Meidias vase, the interest is brought into a sharper focus. Thirteen years after Hamilton's death, James Millingen (1774–1845) wrote that 'The introduction of the collection of vases of Chevalier Hamilton had a great influence on public taste in England', and the Meidias Vase remains the best example of the process.[675]

Meanwhile, in continental Europe a specific interest in the vase continued until the mid-nineteenth century. Over many years Aubin-Louis Millin (1759–1818) published the journal *Magasin Encyclopédique*, and in 1811 two volumes were dedicated to Greek vases. Three illustrations were developed from *AEGR* and appeared in Volume II, which included a further rendition of Pécheux's work from *AEGR,* this time in the outline style *of CEAV.* It was followed in 1817, when Anton Dubois-Maisonneuve offered a version of the upper frieze of the vase, coloured and similar to the original. These later versions all vary from the *AEGR* image to some

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[673] Kalkanis, 'The "Meidias" Hydria'. https://arthistoriography.files.wordpress.com/2013/12/kalkanis.pdf

[674] Ingamells, *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy*, pp. 208–209.

[675] Millingen, J., *Peintures antiques de vases grecs de la Collection de Sir John Coghill* (Rome, 1817), p. ii.

degree, particularly by adding decorative images that mitigated against the stark Neoclassicism of the original, a sign of different times and changed tastes. Francesco Inghirami's (1772–1846) *Pitture di Vasi Fittili* was a well-illustrated and popular work, revisiting *AEGR* and including two of the sectional engravings of the Meidias Vase.[676] However, his interpretation of the scene on the upper frieze was as a chariot race, surely based on Pécheux's imagery. Further variants continued through the century. The German scholar E. Gerhard wrote *Über die Vase des Midias* for Berlin's Royal Academy in 1839. The nine-page commentary marks a movement towards a modern approach to vase scholarship. For the first time the writing on the vase was translated, while a three-dimensional view alongside sectional drawings were offered.[677] Somewhat expanding the long eighteenth century, J.D. Guigniaut published *Nouvelle Galerie Mythologique* in 1850.[678] Such was the fame of the vase that it was deemed sufficiently important to appear within this two-volume work containing entries from ancient Persia to Classical Greece, itself a singular demonstration of the Meidias Vase's influence.[679] Hamilton's role in the Europe-wide interest in it was subordinate to that of Hancarville. Although in the author's view it was a significant error for Hancarville not to engrave the vase in its totality in *AEGR*, the sectional drawings were admired well into the nineteenth century. After its accession into the British Museum, visitors to London could view it. Housed in the Hamilton Gallery, this superb artefact would continue to be associated with the Envoy's name.

[676] Francesco Inghirami, *Pitture di Vasi Fittili* (Florence, 1833–1837).
[677] E. Gerhard, *Über die Vase des Midias: Philogische und historische Abhandlungen* (Berlin Royal Academy, 1839).
[678] Guigniaut, J., *Nouvelle Galerie Mythologique* (Paris, 1850).
[679] Kalkanis, 'The Visual Dissemination of Sir William Hamilton's Vases and their Reception by Early 19th Century Scholarship (c. 1800s–1820s)' *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 75. Bd., H. 4, 2012, p. 487.

In recent times the vase has become a popular icon. It featured in the major 1996 exhibition of Hamilton's artefacts and paintings in the British Museum. Currently the Museum's website offers eighteen photographs of it, together with a significant commentary.[680] A glorious full sized 'pull-out' reproduction of it can be found in Taschen Books, *Antiquities, the Complete Edition.* Thus, 250 years after the vase featured in Hamilton's published collection, readers can enter Hamilton's and Hancarville's world via Taschen's excellent introduction, with its full sized, high-quality images, and with a visit to the British Museum.[681] An image from the Meidias Vase can still be purchased on a mug from the British Museum shop.[682]

The fortunes of *AEGR* in Britain waned, buried alongside the various scandals of Hamilton's later life, explored in Chapter Six. In a markedly different form, they were brought back to life via the short-lived Thomas Kirk (1765–1797). He was a noted English book illustrator and engraver, creating an ensemble from images from both *AEGR* and *CEAV* between 1794 and 1795. The principal difference between Kirk's creations and those associated with Hamilton was that in the former the portrayal of the nude human figure was absent (*See Figure 31*). Either it must be covered or, at least, no genitalia should be recognisable. Thora Brylowe argues persuasively that Kirk 'Demonstrates a thoroughgoing shift in the images associated with Hamilton's vases, rejecting and replacing the idea of the collection offered in earlier times [which embraced] the idealisation of classical beauty.'[683]

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[680] British Museum; The Meidias Vase
http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=399269&partId=1
(Accessed 20 11 2019).
[681] Schutze and Gisler-Huwiler, *Collection of Etruscan, Greek and Roman*.
[682] www.britishmuseumshoponline.org (Accessed 10 02 2020).
[683] Thora Brylowe, 'Two Kinds of CollectionL Sir William Hamilton's Vases Real and Represented',*Eighteenth-Century Life*, 32, 1, 2008, p .44.

Kirk's collection of engravings was not published until shortly after Hamilton's death, which perhaps made a posthumous retrospective of his vases commercially attractive. It was marketed with the title *Outlines from the Figures and Compositions upon the Greek, Roman, and Etruscan Vases of the late Sir William Hamilton with Engraved Borders*. It contained simple line drawings of sixty vases from Hamilton's two vase collections. The introduction made plain the change in taste, with perhaps a veiled reference to the scandal with which Hamilton was mired in his later years. The introduction included the stark statement that 'There was another objective that [Kirk] always kept in view and that was the rejection of all those designs from his collection which tended in any way to indelicate expression.'[684] Thus, a clear distinction was made between the Neoclassical and Romantic notions of taste. Neoclassicists held that 'taste' might be taught, while Romanticists perceived sense experience as being dependent on individual feelings.

A further statement which demonstrated the grip of the Romantic movement was that:

> [They are] not confined merely to the purpose of giving a collection of beautiful designs to please the eye, but to present. . . a series of chaste compositions, that may tend to. . . a pure and correct taste. . . dependent upon our feelings rather than upon learning independent of feeling'. [685]

Later in the introduction there was praise for Hamilton's endeavours:

> The public are indebted to the late Sir William Hamilton for the beautiful collection of designs from the antique vases. . . and ever having less pleasure in the possession of these treasures, than in gratifying the good taste of the world in making them public, he permitted engravings to be made from them. [686]

Predictably, three engravings in the work were ultimately derived from the Meidias Hydria, all from the lower frieze of the vase, showing the Garden of the

[684] Kirk, T, *Outlines*, p. ii.
[685] Ibid., p. ii.
[686]Kirk, T Ibid, p. iv.

Hesperides. Presumably, any depiction of the abduction of the daughters of the Leukippides would be regarded as 'indelicate expression'.

At the same time as Kirk was engraving his bowdlerised images, Hamilton was publishing *CEAV.* Nude images were included but drawn less graphically than on some of the plates in *AEGR*, a trend emphasised in Kirk's publication (*Figure 31.3*). The use of simple outline rather than the elaborate coloured engravings of *AEGR* was in keeping with Hamilton's desire for the work to be affordable to contemporary artists and manufacturers for use as pattern books.

Both publications of vase collections had common objectives. As with all Hamilton's endeavours, the public acknowledgement of his collections and publications, had the common aim of enhancing his name in the world of virtu. The public good was also of great concern to him, through his repeated insistence on the quality of design, which proved to further the Neoclassical cause. As noted in the previous chapter, it was through the agency of others that classicising images, frequently derived from Hamilton's publications, 'went viral' in the several fields of ceramics, fashion, interior decoration and design. They remain highly visible in the twenty-first century, to be found in buildings and everyday objects, even if most observers are ignorant of their provenance.[687] What has become evident is that Hamilton's networks included friends or contacts who were pleased to use his imagery within their spheres of commerce and manufacture, and it is to this issue that the thesis now turns.

The Growth of the Wedgwood Empire

Underlying the success of Josiah Wedgwood's pottery business was the increasing industrialisation of Britain. In 1763 the turnpike road reached Burslem from Liverpool, while for bulk transportation a canal bordered Wedgwood's new Etruria Factory.[688] Both had radical implications for the speed and cost of moving materials to Liverpool and the world. In 1755 John Sadler (1729–1789) and Guy Green (d. 1799) invented a technique for transfer printing on pottery, an aid to mass production. Wedgwood claimed the copyright in 1763, allowing simple decoration to be achieved without the requirement for highly skilled painters. A few were retained to provide quality decoration for the most expensive items.[689] Such factors were the basis for Wedgwood's and Bentley's success in mass producing pottery. 'Etruscomania' was sweeping through Northern Europe and was seized on by Wedgwood and Bentley, greatly aided by Hamilton.

It was Creamware that built Josiah Wedgwood's reputation, a placid colour on which a range of images might be placed. Yet the demand for 'Etruscan' imagery required colours appropriate for the new taste for classical simplicity. The result was that by 1768 he had invented a black, unglazed stoneware of fine texture termed by him 'Black Basalt'. It was so hard that steel would spark when it made contact. The resulting matt finish could be polished, making it suitable for imitating Red and Black figure Greek vases. The range of shapes and imagery was considerable, from seals and plaques to Neoclassical busts. Wedgwood accepted that the prints in *AEGR*

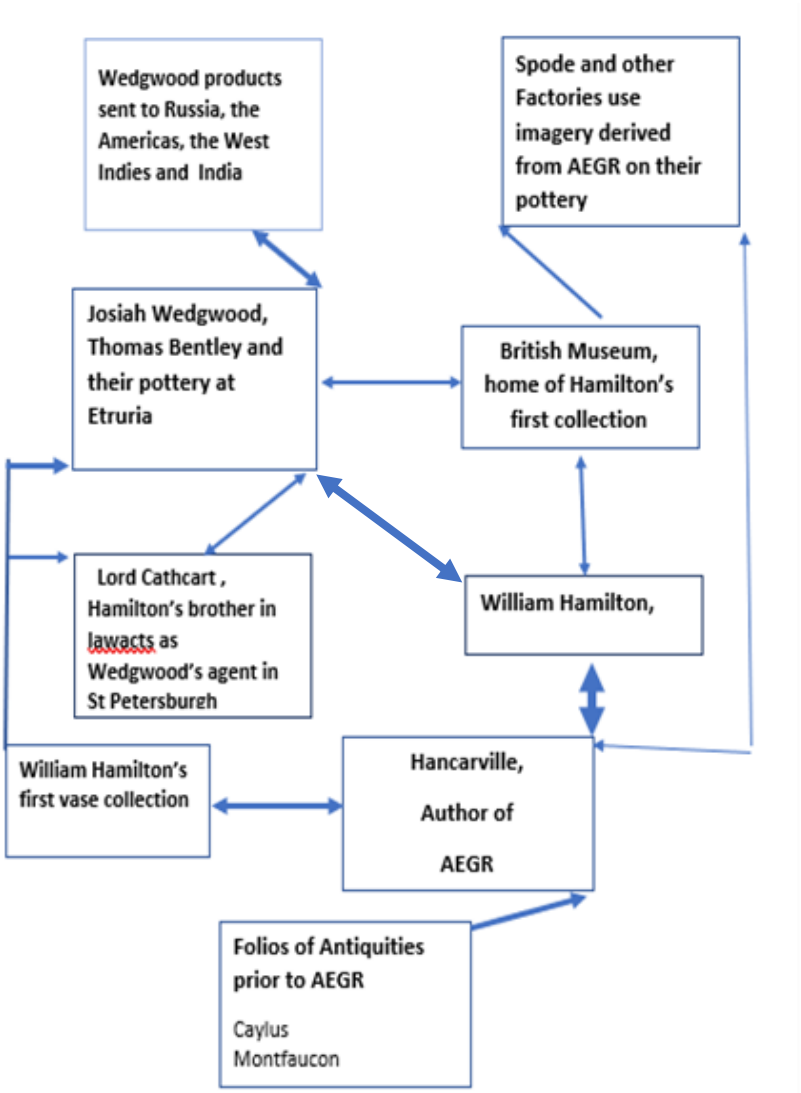
[688] For a more detailed discussion see Nancy Ramage, 'The English Etruria: Wedgwood and the Etruscans', *Etruscan Studies* 14, 2011, pp. 187–199.
[689] Wedgwood Museum. http://www.wedgwoodmuseum.org.uk/learning/discovery_packs/pack/lives-of-the-wedgwoods/chapter/john-sadler-1720-89 (Accessed 01 03 2018).

frequently 'improved' the vases themselves. He wrote that 'Mr Hambleton's prints are another thing. You know he has flattered the old Pott painters very much & has, no doubt, taken his designs from the very best Vases Extant [sic].'[690]

Wedgwood's ability to produce approximations of 'Etruscan' vases in the red-figure style appealed directly to the Neoclassical market, the potter's acute commercial sense being seen when he patented the product in 1769. Jasperware was developed from 1770, noted for its matt and unglazed biscuit finish, so suitable for overlaying with white classical imagery. It was imitated in continental Europe, with the Sevres factory being the most active in this regard. The influence of the Meidias Vase was given added publicity when images from it were used by Wedgwood on the reverse of his famed 'First Day Vases' (*Figure 23.2*). Wedgwood had sight of a very early copy of the engraving from Volume I of *AEGR,* published in 1767. The implication was that Wedgwood and Hamilton were already in close communication and that Wedgwood produced the vases as a marketing strategy. The spirit of the age was one of expanding industry. In 1790 the *Universal British Directory of Trade and Commerce* offered this comment: 'To commerce and manufacture we may justly attribute the stability of Empire and the opulence of individuals since they encourage a universal spirit of industry, remove local prejudice and elevate the mind to magnanimity and reason.'[691] Network Diagram 7 (below) illustrates the links between Hamilton and Wedgwood and the manner in which Neoclassical images were spread.

[690] Ramage, 'Wedgwood and Sir William Hamilton'
[691] Asa Briggs, *The Age of Improvement* (London, 1959).

Network Diagram 7. Vases into a wider World.



In the late 1760s Sir Joshua Reynolds described the art works of antiquity as 'A magazine. . . a storehouse of common property whence everyman has a right to take what he pleases'.[692] Hamilton's vase publications, so heavily Grecian in content, offered a practical demonstration of these aspirations. He was in correspondence with Reynolds, who commented on *AEGR* that 'It is not only magnificent. . . but it is likewise useful to antiquarians and will lead to the advancement of the arts, as

[692] J. Reynolds, *Seven Discourses on Art*, No. 6., p.80.

adding more materials for genius to work upon.'[693] Hancarville's 'improved' figures suited eighteenth-century tastes, with angelic faces and slimmed down figures, framed within patterns of filling ornaments taken from various vases.[694]

The Enlightenment was an age where verisimilitude in relation to antiquities was not necessarily a virtue. One example, noted previously, was the reconstruction of the Warwick vase. Industry received the vases and the publications about them with enthusiasm, and it is in this regard that Hamilton was the facilitator for the widespread knowledge of aspects of Greek vases and their imagery.[695] His personal contribution was slight in *AEGR,* but he himself directed the content of *CEAV* where vase images were 'improved' in the late-eighteenth-century mode. This does not demonstrate either lassitude or disinterest in his early years in Naples. Contemporary aristocrats assumed that their patronage was sufficient and that the lower orders would deal with the business of manufacture. Hamilton's authorship of *CEAV* with its 'improved' figures demonstrated him moving beyond aristocratic norms. Overall, the opinions of Hamilton, Hancarville and Joshua Reynolds were that the skills of ancient artists, including vase potters and painters, should be revered but not sanctified. They brought the domains of antiquarianism and fine art closer through discussion and the exchange of ideas within the Republic of Letters.

The First Day Vases were not considered by Wedgwood to be the factory's finest output. He reserved this accolade for John Flaxman's Apotheosis of Homer (*Figure 23.3 left*), together with his own replica of the Portland Vase. Both vessels have close connections with Hamilton. He was in regular correspondence with Wedgwood, who

[693] Morrison, Letter 17, Sir Joshua Reynolds to Hamilton, London, 28 03 1769.
[694] Coltman, *Fabricating the Antique*, Chapter 3.
[695] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, pp. 72–73.

had sent him a bas relief based on the vase (*Figure 23.3 right*). Self-interest was one motive for the gift. The letter also mentions the cost of the item as £31 (£2,108):

> Suppose we were to make Sr. Wm. Hamilton a present of an Etruscan tablet, Homer etc. the expense to us would be trifling in comparison to the value of the present, & the compliment paid to him, which he well deserves at our hands, and it could be the best introduction they could have in the country where he resides.[696]

When Wedgwood sent the Envoy this bas relief, Hamilton wrote an effusive letter of thanks:

> I have the pleasure of receiving your delightful bas relief of the Apotheose [sic] of Homer or some celebrated poet. It is indeed far superior to my most sanguine expectations. I was sure that your industry would produce something excellent in the way of Bas reliefs. It astonishes all the artists here. It is more pure and in a truer antique taste than any of their performances.[697]

It was the copy of the Portland Vase that Wedgwood regarded as Hamilton's finest piece. Although it was in Hamilton's possession for only a year, his determination to bring it to Britain demonstrated the depth of his connoisseurship and concern for art and design in his native country. He displayed it at various venues, including the Royal Academy. Such was the admiration for the vase that even Queen Charlotte (1744–1818) came to view it. Its new owner, the Duchess of Portland, died within a year of her purchase; it then became the property of William Henry Cavendish, 3rd Duke of Portland, (1738–1809). Wedgwood negotiated with him for the loan of the vase for a year at a cost of £100 (£15,000). Hamilton was delighted, enthusing that 'It gives me much satisfaction to know that the Barberini Vase, later known as the Portland Vase, not only remains in England, but is in your hands, as I know well that no one can make a better use of it.'[698] With great

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[696] Ramage, N., 'Wedgwood and Sir William Hamilton: Their Personal and Artistic Relationship'. *Thirty-fifth Annual Wedgwood International Seminar* (l990) pp. 71-90.
[697] Anthony Burton, *Josiah Wedgewood: A New Biography* (Pen and Sword Books, Barnsley, 2019).
[698] K. Painter and D. Whitehouse, 'The Portland Vase', *Journal of Glass Studies*, 32, 1990, p. 40.

enthusiasm, Wedgwood set about copying its form in Jasperware, a monumental task. Hamilton advised him that on this occasion he should not 'develop' its imagery:

> I admire your enthusiasm on the frequent and close examination of this vase and am happy that its superior merit is felt by some few in England. It would be dangerous to touch [the exact imagery] as it would help diffuse the seeds of good taste.[699]

Wedgwood and his son experimented with leading contemporary artists and modellers to discover ways to copy the vase over a four-year period. Although a self-imposed task, Wedgwood was determined to complete it. Hamilton was kept informed of the process. Wedgwood was always a realist, as shown in the letter he wrote to Hamilton shortly after he finished the vase, dated 24th June 1779:

> When I first engaged in this work, and had Montfaucon only to copy, I proceeded with spirit, on sufficient assurance that I should be able to equal, or excel, if permitted, that copy of the vase; but now that I can indulge myself with full and repeated examinations of the original work itself, my crest is much fallen.[700]

Writing again to Hamilton, he explained in some detail how 'his great work' had developed:

> I have now finished a third and last edition of the figure. . . my present difficulty is to give those beautiful shades to the thin and distant parts of the figures, for which the original artist availed himself of the semi-transparency of the white glass cutting it down nearer and nearer to the blue ground, in proportion as he wished to increase the depth of shade.[701]

After the replica's completion it was shown in Portland House in London accompanied by a booklet, *Account of the Barberini, now Portland Vase.* Sir Joshua Reynolds enthused about it, 'I can declare it to be a correct and faithful imitation,

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[699] Mss. Keele: E.26-18976. *The Portland Vase was previously known as the Barbarini Vase*.
[700] http://www.wedgwoodmuseum.org.uk/learning/discovery-packs/pack/lives-of-the-wedgwoods/chapter/portland-vase (Accessed 28 03 18).
[701] Susan Walker, *The Portland Vase* (British Museum Press, 2004), pp. 22–24. http://www.wedgwoodmuseum.org.uk/learning/discovery-packs/pack/lives-of-the-wedgwoods/chapter/portland-vase (Accessed 28 03 18).

both in regard to the general effect, and the most minute detail of the parts.'[702] It is unusual for Hamilton to be given prominence in discussions regarding the Portland vase, but the correspondence makes it clear that he was in close touch with the project and that Wedgwood regarded his opinions with deference and respect.

A further means whereby Hamilton assisted Wedgwood involved copying classical busts in the Royal Neapolitan collection, perhaps clandestinely, which he then sent to Wedgwood:

> I send you a box of Models in clay, copied from the principal busts found in Herculaneum. . . . They were modelled in order to be copied in biscuit China in his Sicilian Majesty's Manufactury. I prevailed on the artist at the same time to make duplicates in order to send you a set. I thought this collection being of proper size for you to copy in your basalte [sic].[703]

The range of Wedgwood's Neoclassical output went beyond vases and busts. Even buttons were included within his work. Hamilton was sent a sample, but the letter he wrote in return indicated the resistance of the local population to Neoclassicism: 'In this country, its inhabitants seem perfectly insensible to everything simple and elegant, to succeed here it must be cheap and gawdy.'[704] Exploration of the use made of *AEGR* and *CEAV* demonstrates that Hamilton was indeed a universal facilitator of knowledge and appreciation of Greek vases.

Wedgwood made good commercial use of the early prints from AEGR, some of which he obtained directly from Hamilton and others via Lord Cathcart (1721–1776), who was married to Hamilton's sister, Jane. For Wedgwood, the publication's utility lay in the quality, inventiveness, colour and minute detailing of the dimension of some vases. Hancarville's scholarly text was disregarded in this context. The shades

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[702] Walker, S. The Portland Vase., pp. 22–24.
[703] Keele Manuscripts E-22495.
[704] Ferguson, Patricia, 'Vase Madness: Vases and the Antique, 1765-1790'. Article in 'A taste for the Antique: The Neoclassical Style and Ceramics in England', *English Ceramic Circle*, 2018, pp. 83-104.

of colour in Wedgwood's 'Etruscan' vases were, together with the quality of design on them, superior to other contemporary potteries. Wedgwood boasted that his products were 'not only. . . to imitate the paintings on the Etruscan vases, but to do much more; to give the beauty of design, and the advantage of light and shade in various colours.'[705]

Wedgwood's new factory at Etruria initiated production, with the Master himself, although crippled, throwing six 'First Day Vases', and his partner Thomas Bentley (1731-180) turning the wheel (*Figure 23.2*). Demand soared, and Wedgwood now had the capacity to expand. Childhood sickness may have prevented him operating the potter's wheel, except on very special occasions, but it resulted in his energy and talent being directed to manufacture and design. Hamilton may have had the finest vase collection, but Wedgwood was the expert in terms of making commercial use of it. While Hamilton was rapidly building the first collection of vases from 1764 at Naples, in far off Stoke-on-Trent Josiah Wedgwood began the process of becoming an international supplier of ceramics. The *modus operandi* of the two men was utterly different. In January 1769 Wedgwood was in London engaging in market research. In a letter to Bentley, he wrote that 'Etruscan Vases are all the rage but marbling with gold is hissed at [but for] Etruscan ware there is an epidemical madness.'[706] Together with Bentley they had opened a large showroom close to the fashionable St James Square. The essence of Wedgwood's commercial success was that of being a bulk manufacturer and trader, his skill lying in the adaption of designs to suit his customers' tastes. The reality was that, as a manufacturer seeking profit, he produced what would sell. By such means *AEGR* itself became '(a) kind of elite performance in which truth and precision lay not in the relationship between the

[705] Wedgwood & Bentley, *Ornamental Ware Catalogue* (1779).
[706] Burton, *Josiah Wedgwood*, p. 84.

original and the copy, but in the conviction of the performance and the skill of the operation'.[707] Other potteries, both in Britain and on the continent, later copied the use of classical images which can be traced to Hamilton's publications. The Rothberg Factory endeavoured to copy red-figure Greek pottery while Josiah Spode used Thomas Kirk's expurgated edition of Greek vase images, thus avoiding any moral controversy. Blue transfer pottery flourished in the years after 1810. Behind his stony commercial exterior, Josiah Wedgwood displayed a touching romanticism in his empathy with the art of the ancient potters and painters, which may help in understanding his regard for Hamilton and his collections of vases:

> If any of your Friends wonder why you have not got more & oftener, please to give them to understand that it is very difficult to make fine and perfect things of any kind. How often does our great Mistress Nature Fail, even in the finest Order of her Productions! The angelic Sex themselves are not all perfectly straight, delicate and beautiful, no more than our Vases.[708]

Even while painted vases with nude imagery became objects of suspicion, they were popular when their imagery was modified and perceived as refined and beautiful by the middling people

Wedgwood was an inventor of new variants of pottery, on which he would place a classical Greek image, amended to the zeitgeist of the age. He had followed Hamilton's and Reynold's stipulation that images of ancient artefacts should be developed according to the muse of artist and designer.

Beyond the famous examples discussed, there were the tens of thousands of vessels sold with Neoclassical decorations superimposed, on items as varied as tea-pots, butter dishes, love tokens and flower vases. Wedgwood was not alone, with other manufacturers frequently choosing Neoclassical decoration for their products.

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[707] Coltman, *Fabricating the Antique*, p. 92.

[708] J. Farrar, ed., *Letters of Josiah Wedgwood* (Cambridge, 1906). Letter to Bentley sent, 13 10 1770.

By the turn of the eighteenth century there was a clear dichotomy between actual vases, perceived by many as morally suspicious, and those of the Wedgwood style, purchased as discrete and tasteful examples of Neoclassicism, although far removed from their distant originals. Brylowe summed it up thus: 'From fireplaces to papier-mâché boxes, from wall paintings to tapestry, the influence of [Hamilton's] publications can be seen everywhere.'[709] Taste may have changed by the nineteenth century, but had Hamilton not collected vociferously around Naples, been patron of *AEGR* and author of *CEAV*, it is doubtful if Wedgwood's triumphs in production would have been as great.

The clear implication was that the millions internationally who saw and purchased the modified Neoclassical imagery products, appreciated and derived pleasure from them. Hamilton was a passive partner in their universal popularity, it being the hard-headed business acumen of people like Wedgwood, Bentley, Cathcart and Spode who drove appreciation of classical imagery forward to include the middling people. Despite these reservations, overall it seems reasonable to respect Wedgwood's opinion. In a letter to Hamilton (June 1787) he commented:

> The whole nation as well as I have long spoken with gratitude. . . of the assistance you have given to the arts in this country . . . The collection of Etruscan vases in the British Museum will ever be resorted to for the finest models for elegant and simple forms.[710]

While Hamilton was vigorously building a classical collection for Hancarville to publish, Wedgwood was marketing pre-Neoclassical table ware. Hamilton gave a strong hint that the Company should manufacture some vases based on *AEGR*:[711]

> [The ambassador from Malta to the Court of Rome], Monsieur de Breteuil has desired me to procure him a compleat [sic] service of your white ware with the purple edge. Be so good as to pack up a set and send it to his Excellency at

[709] Brylowe, 'Two Kinds of Collection'.
[710] James R. Boyle, Keith A. McLeod and Gaye Blake Roberts (Eds). Beazley, J. 'Josiah Wedgwood and the Potter's Arts'. *Wedgwood International Seminar, 1996,* p. 78.
[711] Morrison, Letter 28, Hamilton to Messers Wedgwood and Bentley, Naples, 02 03 1770.

> Rome . . . sending me the bill of landing which I shall immediately order my banker to pay you . . . I will surely send you some drawings of the fine shaped vases soon; continue to be very attentive to the simplicity and elegance of the forms, which is the chief article & you cannot consult the originals in the [British] museum too often.[712]

It remains an open question as to the sum of money Hamilton demanded from the Maltese Ambassador. Clearly, dealings with Wedgwood had already commenced. Soon vases would be ready for his inspection at the British Museum. Meanwhile, proofs from *AEGR* were on their way from Hamilton to the manufacturers. Hamilton's brother-in-law, Lord Charles Cathcart, the Ambassador to Russia, acted differently from Hamilton's aristocratic insouciance in that he was ready to engage directly in commercial activity. Both Lord and Lady Cathcart were in league with Wedgwood as he developed an international market for his products. The links between Hamilton and Wedgwood were twofold. The first was the mutual connection with Lord Cathcart and secondly there was the continued friendship and correspondence between them. In his *Catalogue of Cameos,* Wedgwood relates how Hamilton's early proofs of *AEGR* came into his possession via Lord Cathcart, and the use he made of them.[713] As early as 1767, he wrote in a letter to Bentley:

> You will easily imagine what may be of any use to me in the Antiquitys [sic] [*AEGR*] if you find time to dip into them. The colour of the earthenware vessels, the paintings, the substance used by the ancient potters . . . who knows what you may hit on or what we may strike out between us? You may depend on an ample share of the profits arising from any such discovery.[714]

The letter is redolent with the hope of profit, not a love of antiquity.

Sir William's role in this, as in other aspects of his life, was to be duped. The phrase 'we can do great things for each other' did not include the Envoy, the originator of

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[712] Morrison, Letter 28. Hamilton to Messers Wedgwood and Bentley, 22 03 1770.
[713] See also J.H. Muntz, *Encaustic or Count Caylus's Method of Painting in the Manner of the Ancients* (A. Webley, at the Bible and Crown near Chancery Lane, Holborn, London, 1873).
[714] B. Racham, 'Vases or the State of Pottery in Europe', *Society of Antiquarians of London*, Occasional Paper 1 (1943), p. 7.

their early profits. Wedgwood praised him to his face: 'I shall for ever retain grateful thanks for the kind partiality with which you have been pleased to honour my weak exertions.'[715] Yet in a letter to Thomas Bentley the tone is that of a cynical businessman: 'Suppose you show [Hamilton] some of the vases, not only to have his advice. . . as you will gain through their [sic] being consulted. . . and they agreeably flattered. . . considering themselves some party in the affair.'[716]

The arrangement between Cathcart and Wedgwood was that the manufacturer should provide them with extensive and expensive sets of dining ware and ornaments. Then, following a dinner at which the table ware would be admired, any of the guests who wished to acquire similar ceramics would order them directly from Lord and Lady Cathcart, which Wedgwood would then dispatch to the purchasers. In effect, Wedgwood and Cathcart were establishing a showroom in Russia. In modern parlance it is a clear example of 'product placement'. By sponsoring Wedgwood's products at St Petersburg, and still calling them Etruscan, Wedgwood and Bentley initiated a rapidly growing vogue for such items and the partners established a considerable trade with major Russian cities, lasting into the nineteenth century.[717] Hamilton had his own Russian connection. He worked with Count Italinsky (1744–1832) , the Russian Envoy to Rome, in the production of *CEAV*. The Count was a person of great scholarly renown, who would have made Hamilton's name known in his own Czarist circles.

As Wedgwood's entrepreneurialism developed, so the Americas were a favourable export market. Initially he felt his cheaper utilitarian products were most suited to it, with the first orders from Boston arriving in 1764. Demand grew rapidly, and they became popular along the Eastern seaboard from 1770. His account books for three

[715] Farrer, *Correspondence of Josiah Wedgwood*, p. 42.
[716] R. Reilly, *Josiah Wedgwood 1730–1795* (Macmillan, London, 1992), p. 208.
[717] A. Amden, ed., *Noctes Atticae* (Copenhagen, 2002), p. 222.

months in 1771 indicated that ceramics valued at £1200 (£202,000) were sold. Later in the century he exported Black Basalt and Biscuit Ware to the New World. Thus, designs originating with Hamilton and Hancarville became universal property.

Wedgwood did not use Hamilton alone in his quest for classical images. In 1787 he wrote to him in Naples advising him that John Flaxman (1755-1826) was preparing to go to Italy for two years with the intention of establishing a modelling studio in Rome to supply Wedgwood with casts and copies of antique bas-reliefs for reproduction in Jasper Ware. It would be new to the English market and not available to other manufacturers. Wedgwood wrote that 'Flaxman had promised 'to employ for me all the time he can spare in Rome and make models, drawings and other improvements in the arts of modelling and designing'. [718] Even more momentous was the unforeseen social effect of making images from Greece and Magna Graecia, previously seen only in museums or aristocratic collections accessible for the middle classes. Classical images originating from the ancient world, prettily mounted on Wedgwood's Biscuit Ware, were now available for the middling people to purchase. Scholars might trace a link to Hamilton even if the buyers were unaware of it.

The opinion that Hamilton was wholly obsessed with his own reputation and publications is exaggerated, at least in regard to his relationship with Wedgwood. During the period when he battled with Hancarville and his creditors to retrieve the copper plates for the later volumes of *AEGR*, he wrote to Wedgwood sending him copies of plates from the Duke of Tuscany's collection:

> I have the pleasure of sending you a few drawings of most elegant formed vases which are in the Great Duke of Tuscany's collection & differ from mine as the originals are simply black with the ornaments in relief. Your ware is capable of imitating them exactly.[719]

[718] Josiah Wedgwood to Sir William Hamilton, 16 June 1787, WM.S. E26.
[719] Ramage, Wedgwood and Sir William Hamilton', p. 73; Keele MS 30-32852.

Hamilton's motivation was typical, namely that 'I have nothing more at heart than to contribute as far as I can towards the advancements of the fine arts in Great Britain.'[720] Once in Wedgwood's purview, knowledge of *AEGR* was spread by personal networks, such as that of the Lunar Men, while the excellence of the pottery would be recognised by customers' recommendations.[721] Both the prints from *AEGR* and the first vase collection in the British Museum was of great importance to Wedgwood. In a letter to Thomas Bentley he wrote 'I shall expect to see a long, very long, acc't of Mr Hambletons Vases etc, etc. for alas I do not know when I can come and see them [sic].'[722]

Hamilton's wish to see artists develop the images in his publications was amply fulfilled. At the lowest level the volumes were sometimes used simply as 'coffee table' picture books. One example already mentioned was that of Lord Kildare.[723] A more serious interest was that of P.J. Wendler, an agent of Matthew Boulton (1728–1809). Writing to his employer from Naples, he recorded that he had purchased *AEGR* which contained:

> 456 prints in folio . . .fit to furnish 2 or more rooms and to chuse from the said prints handsome designs and patterns for the Birmingham Manufactorys . . . Mr Hamilton bought the Cabinet of the said vases and dedicats the Prints to His Brittish Majesty [sic].[724]

The reference is significant. Hamilton was linked to the vases, four magnificently illustrated volumes and also to the monarchy. Together they offered a significant provenance

[720] Ramage, 'Wedgwood and Sir William Hamilton', p. 73.
[721] Jenny Uglow, *The Lunar Men: The Men Who Made the Future* (Faber, Bath, 2002).
[722] Ramage, 'Wedgwood and Sir William Hamilton'; Farrer, *Letters of Josiah Wedgwood*, pp. 39-40. Letter dated September 1771.
[723] Coltman, *Fabricating the Antique*, p. 76.
[724] P.J. Wedler to Matthew Boulton, July 4, 1767. Birmingham City Archive. MS/3782/12/13/98

The vogue for Greek-inspired embellishments was evident in many aristocratic homes. For some, it was irrelevant whether the vases were real or decorative reproductions. Robert Adam (1728–1792) designed Bowood House in Wiltshire for the third Marquis of Lansdowne (1780–1863). Its library was similar to that of Sir John Soane but, unlike the original vases in Soane's house, the collection of the Marquis was less fussy. He acknowledged that he had no access to 'Sir W. Hamilton's designs' and stated that his replicas need only be painted on one side. His instruction to Adam was that the vases:

> Are to be placed at a considerable height near the ceiling which inclines me to prefer the taller [vases]. Perhaps, however, if you have enough, 16 to 22 inches will be sufficient- those two of them that are to stand at the corners I should wish to be broader than the rest . . . I should be glad to have as great a variety of shapes as possible.[725]

Here it is evident that aestheticism was master, with antiquarianism subordinate to it.[726] Ceramic was not the only material used. Tischbein had impressed Grand Tourists with his large-scale prints from *CEAV.* The artist had decorated a room with them, '(m)uch like our modern paper hangings and are much suited to the walls of a room as to the whole furniture'.[727]

A unique example of the derivatives from the Meidias Vase is to be found at Newtimber Place, Hassocks, East Sussex where Pécheux's image was enlarged to decorate an entire wall (*Figure 21*). The front door opens into a large room some 15x8 metres and scenes from *AEGR* dominate the decoration. A modern visitor may feel a sense of disappointment as this 'AEGR' gallery is not alive with colour, but is dark, and the furnishings faded, presumably dimmed over time, and with some images water damaged. The artist responsible is as unknown as the owner's motivation, but most

[725] Keele MS. 24904/126. Third Marquess Lansdowne to Wedgwood II, May 14 1813.
[726] For a full discussion, see Coltman, *Fabricating the Antique*, pp. 87–92.
[727] Tatham, C., to Henry Holland, 1796. Tatham Correspondence, Soane Museum Library.

believe the hugely enlarged images date from 1790.[728] The Pécheux engraving has been modified to show the right-hand chariot pulled, not by a quadriga, but rather a triga (*Figure 21.2*). This apart, the representation is mostly true to the original's representation in AEGR. The West and North Walls are filled with images of Paris and Helen. Note how the tapestry-covered couch harmonises with the wall decoration, some of which are *trompe-l'œil* (*Figure 21.1*). Door panels are decorated with single figures, many being replicas from Hancarville's engravings. The inclusion of an image of the Hamilton Vase with so much other material originating with *AEGR* would ensure that the Envoy was recognised by knowledgeable contemporaries viewing it.[729] Within such a setting this image displays Pécheux's work as not only a picture gallery but, when the ancillary decoration on the furniture is considered, a three-dimensional space.

Jenny Uglow aligns the influence of *AEGR* with the discoveries at Herculaneum and Pompeii, but suggests that Robert Adam's *Ruins of the Palace of Diocletian*,[730] the *Antichità de Ercolano* and Stuart and Revett's *Antiquaries of Athens* all had a place in design and manufacture.[731] Following the developing trend to explore countries of ancient antiquity, such as Greece and Italy, many designers, who had themselves visited Italy, started delineating their architecture, internal décor and furniture along the lines of the classical architecture and archaeological artefacts they had seen.

Unlike Hamilton, Robert Adam's (1728–1792) background was that of the highly educated son of a notable Scottish architect. Both at school and later at Edinburgh University his education focussed on classical languages and literature, natural

[728] J.H. Kiechler, 'Murals at Newtimber Place', *Sussex Archaeological Society*, Paper 113 (1975).
[729] British Museum, Vase F. 284.
[730] R. Adam, *The Ruins of the Palace of the Emperor Diocletian at Spalatro in Dalmatia* (London, 1764).
[731] Uglow, *The Lunar Men*, pp. 147–149.

philosophy, mathematics and anatomy. His knowledge and skills were further enhanced by a Grand Tour that lasted five years, based largely in Rome. During his Italian years he studied classical architecture and honed his drawing skills. One of his tutors was Giovanni Battista Piranesi. Significantly he had met Johann Joachim Winckelmann during this period and the engravings in this work clearly demonstrate his pupillage with Piranesi. His great output of Neoclassical architecture and interior decoration has been much copied and remains a popular expression of an art form based on the classical heritage. He developed the distinctive Adam Style, which became one of the most successful neoclassical models in eighteenth-century Britain. Adam held the post of Architect of the King's Works from 1761 to 1769.

Hamilton can be linked with Adam at various levels. However, it must be remembered that Adam was a highly educated Classicist and a considerable force in the world of art and architecture. His knowledge and comprehension of antiquity was of a higher order than Hamilton's. On arrival in Naples, the Envoy might claim no more than being a fine-art connoisseur. Beyond this, he was effectively an inquisitive amateur, under the patronage of George III. The two men's networks overlapped. Piranesi was Adam's tutor, and he was also an admirer of Hamilton. All three had connections with J.J. Winckelmann. Adam and Hamilton were both Fellows of the Royal Society, Adam elected in 1761, followed by Hamilton in 1766. In turn, the close interaction of its Fellowship ensured that the two men would have many contacts in common.

Robert Adam's role in Neoclassicism is distinct from that of Hamilton, in that Adam preferred to use Third and Fourth Style Roman Paintings as the basis for his designs after *L'étrusque*.[732] A detailed analysis of the Etruscan Dressing Room at Osterley

[732] For detail of Roman Painting styles see Roger Ling, *Roman Paintings* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991), chapters 2–4.

House in West London demonstrates Adam's approach to the Neoclassical (*Figure 24).* Walpole wrote specifically and unflatteringly about the dressing room, stating that 'The last chamber. . . chills you; it is called Etruscan and is painted all over like Wedgwood ware with black and yellow small grotesques. Even the chairs are of painted wood.'[733] A fundamental misconception about the room has developed. Even the National Trust, owners of Osterley, insist that the Etruscan Room was inspired by Hamilton, rather than by Third and Fourth Style Roman painting. The official guide contains this comment:

> Adam was intrigued by the Etruscan vases in Sir William Hamilton's collection, but he admitted that there was no evidence of such colour schemes or decorative designs had ever been applied to interior design in Classical times.[734]

Presumably, Adam had viewed plates from *AEGR* and for his interiors he made extensive use of Wedgwood's 'Etruscan' style ceramic tablets, medallions and Black Basalt ware. Yet the attribution of Hamilton's vases for Osterley cannot be correct. It is clear that Roman art was Adam's primary source. The vase illustrations are generic, not individual, and might have been taken from many of the printed works of the age. The nearby Syon House, again with many features by Robert Adam, demonstrated a clear Roman influence on his work (*Figure 24*). Both houses contain Adam's chairs. It is probable that he would have witnessed the emergence of charred examples of furniture from Herculaneum and Pompeii, and it cannot be doubted that memories from them were evident in his products.

Thomas Chippendale (1718–1779) enjoyed neither a noble name nor a fine education, emerging from a family apprenticeship as a cabinet maker. There were similarities with Wedgwood in that he established himself as a wholesale manufacturer of fine furniture, employing many. Like Wedgwood, he publicised his

[733] Coltman, *Fabricating the Antique*, p. 95.
[734] S. Evans, *Osterley Park and Gardens* (National Trust, London, 2009), p. 17.

goods. Chippendale published *The Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Directory* as the first attempt in England to publish a book of designs for furniture as a means of self-promotion.[735] It resulted in his business immediately becoming known to a wide circle of potential clients, and forever afterwards his name became a by-word for prized furniture. He did not confine himself to the Neoclassical but, like Wedgwood's, his factory produced what would sell. Nevertheless, in the *Cabinet Maker's Directory* the first images were of drawings illustrating orders of Greek columns in considerable detail, not dissimilar from some of the fully detailed 'architectural' vases depicted in *AEGR*. Overall, it is apparent that these two experts in aspects of fine art offered a radically different approach to Neoclassicism, distinct from the vases and their iconography published by Sir William and then developed by Wedgwood and other potteries. Hamilton's influence is often seen in conjunction with them. In Osterley House Black Basalt vases are set against an Adam fireplace, while in the Etruscan room there is a single and extremely rare Pembroke table by Henry Clay, celebrated for his japanning technique on *papier maché* surfaces.[736] The central pattern copied Pécheux's Meidias Vase interpretation, with the two side panels copying *AEGR* Volume II, Plates 106 and 129.[737] The table is an addition to the Etruscan Room, with the Roman painting styles so evident within it.[738] However, the table is not integral to the designs. The 'Etruscomania' craze involved other art forms, developed ever more widely at the end of the eighteenth century. For example, Nathaniel Curzon (1752–1837) had silver condiment sets created in the shape of Wedgwood's First Day Vases.

[735] T. Chippendale, *The Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Directory* (London, 1762).
[736] National Trust Catalogue, NT 771794.
[737] See Coltman, *Fabricating the Antique*, pp. 94–95.
[738] Henry Clay is noted in:
https://thesourceforantiques.wordpress.com/2017/03/07/unearthing-an-etruscan-mystery-a-penwork-pembroke-table-attributed-to-henry-clay (Accessed 26 08 2018).

Each had individual figures taken from the frieze of the Garden of the Hesperides inscribed on them, set in a garden elaborated with palm trees, thus moving imagery even further from Greek originals.

Although this chapter has covered a wide geographic area, made mention of the Industrial Revolution and considered Wedgwood's and Chippendale's sales techniques, Sir William Hamilton's influence was profound, but by no means exclusive. Furthermore, it might be argued that as the publications of Adam and Chippendale predate those of Hamilton, he might have been somewhat influenced by them and not the reverse.

In summary, Hancarville, Reynolds and Walpole all supported Hamilton's view that the artefacts of antiquity, although worthy, might legitimately be developed into forms that were thought desirable in the eighteenth century. The esteem in which Hamilton's vase publications were held was clear, even when public taste had turned against the explicit imagery in *AEGR* and to a lesser extent *CEAV*, in favour of Kirk's retrained publication. It was the business acumen of Wedgwood and Bentley which developed classical imagery, making it commercially successful. In relation to the Portland Vase, Hamilton provided Wedgwood with his greatest craft challenge, in its reproduction, but Hamilton was determined that Britain should be its destiny. It should be emphasised that, without the Envoy's collections and publications, the imagery from the Wedgwood and other factories would have been much the poorer.

In one sense vases continued to belong to Sir William. In the British Museum, the collection was in the Hamilton Gallery, where every visitor would associate the vases with him.[739] The second vase collection, although no longer in his name, was grandly displayed in Thomas Hope's (1769–1831) Cavendish Square mansion, with its purpose-

[739] Miller, *That Noble Cabinet*, p. 79.

built interior designed to house his superb collections. In any event, Hamilton's financial situation would have prevented him from displaying his collections appropriately, and their final destinations were the very best he could have hoped for. That his last vase collection was to become the Hope Collection pleased him:

> This morning Mr. Thos. Hope came to me, and having offered the round sum of four thousand pound down [£522,000] for my whole collection of vases for which I had asked £5000 [£919,000], finding that I could get no more, & considering trouble, risk & then a little vanity in the collection being kept entire, which I made with such pains, I struck [a deal] with him. . . by which means they will not be dispersed, but remain together for the inspection of the learned antiquaries and artists.[740]

Millions of images worldwide reflect Hamilton's passion, while his determination to make them available to all has been fully accomplished.

[740] Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton*, p. 310.

Chapter Six

Beauty, Suspicion and New Classical Imagery: Hamilton and Public Perception 1785–1803

Chapter Five showed Sir William Hamilton in a positive light, with the Envoy gaining credit for his antiquities collections while supporting those developing Neoclassical imagery. Yet others traded on his benign nature. Hancarville prevented *AEGR* becoming the two-volume *catalogue raisonné* that Hamilton hoped for, while Wedgwood cynically praised Hamilton's publications while preventing the Envoy making any financial gain from them. With Hamilton's obvious achievements in natural philosophy and the world of antiquities, recognition and respect would be a natural outcome for his life's work. *Figure 3* is David Allen's portrait of Sir William Hamilton, Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily. It shows him as a Knight of the Bath in full diplomatic regalia. After Hamilton's first vase collection was sold to the British Museum, David Allen requested that Matthew Maty, the Secretary of the Royal Society and Keeper of Printed books at the British Museum would accept his portrait of Hamilton, where, for a time, it was hung in the Hamilton Gallery. His letter to the Museum is apt. He donated the portrait out of:

> Gratitude and Regard' [for Hamilton] a true lover and Promotor of the fine Arts and protector of Artists, of which I have had the honour of a very particular share': I have indeavoured to do his portraite as well as I can; And considering his great ingenuity and merit in making such a Noble Collection of interesting and beautiful monuments of Antiquity which are at present rightly placed in the B. Museum has induced me to think that a portrait of the worthy collector might very properly find a place in that collection. On this consideration I have ventured to offer the picture to the Directors, which if they thought the weak performance worthy of being put up with this collection, would do me an

> honnor and be of service to me as the work would be seen, and I should be very happy if the picture should not be thought unworthy of their acceptance [sic].[741]

Hamilton was not to enjoy an honourable old age, and this chapter will show him as a figure in sharp decline, in health, academic esteem and public reputation. Instead of respectful dignity, James Gillray (1756–1815), amongst others, viciously satirised him a short time before his death, as shown in *Figure 25.1.* This metamorphosis involves three elements: the exploration of how Hamilton's work led to Wedgwood and others amending vase imagery to suit changing taste; the role of Emma Hamilton, in conjunction with Sir William, in publicising vases; and the profound effect of the Napoleonic invasion of Naples, conjoined with the scandal of Emma Sir William and Nelson. These themes are explored against the background of significant social change strongly influenced by the rise of the Evangelical Movement and the growth of literacy.

In 1798 Italy was invaded by Napoleonic forces who reached Naples rapidly. Suddenly, Hamilton was no longer the affable antiquarian scholar in a diplomatic backwater but was placed at the epicentre of Mediterranean diplomacy. Yet the Envoy's health was fading and increasingly it was the arrogant Admiral Nelson, influenced by Emma Hamilton, who appeared to dictate British policy rather than the Envoy, whose job it was to execute orders from the Foreign Department in London. Resulting from his diplomatic failings, together with the public scandal arising from the *ménage à trois* between Hamilton, Emma and Nelson, he was recalled to London in 1799. Alongside his personal disgrace, the ancient vases which he had done so much to popularise themselves became objects of suspicion. However, a love of the ancient classical literature remained entrenched in the public schools and

[741] https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portraitExtended/mw02865/Sir-William-Hamilton (Accessed 20 12 2019).

universities, continuing into the adult lives of past students. The popularity of Alexander Pope's (1688–1744) *The Iliad of Homer*, is but one example. It was also the period in which the discoveries made when the Buried Cities revealed their contents heightened public awareness of the classical past

Concurrently, a new style of classical imagery emerged. In essence, the marketplace, rather than connoisseurs, dictated the move to a chaste Classical imagery. Unbeknown to most purchasers, Hamilton's vases and publications continued to influence these new products. As shown in Chapter Five, ceramics manufacturers were motivated by profit, their products responding to public demand. As Hamilton's esteem diminished, so an acceptable form of pseudo-classical imagery, incorporated into various products, became treasured possessions in the homes of the 'middling people'.

Social Classes and a new Age

Scholars have perceived tension within an enlarged middle group in society between continuity and change. Some have emphasised a closed hierarchical landed society where aristocratic forces controlled the levers of change, while other commentators have hypothesised that industrial trends were the cause of a more open society based on commercial development.[742] As a consequence, merchants and manufacturers grew richer as trade increased at home and abroad. Such wealth trickled down to shopkeepers and tradesmen. In the countryside the enclosure movement improved farming efficiency as the many small plots held by a self-supporting peasantry formed larger units managed by tenant farmers with wealth to invest in new farming methods, even though concurrently it brought misery to those who lost their holdings. The great landowners also prospered through improved farming and, for some, the mineral deposits on their lands. This included Hamilton's

[742] Barry, 'Consumers' Passions', pp.207–216. Barry's paper summarises research in the field.

Slebech estate. Aristocrats spent on a grand scale, a legacy being the great Georgian houses that frequently contained collections of antiquities and pictures. Yet they represented a miniscule proportion of the population.[743] The middling people had insufficient means to acquire expensive luxury goods, so turned instead to ogling the rich by their purchase of cheaper copies. Not for them were the aristocratic collections of ancient vases, but rather the purchase of bijou items such as Wedgwood's mass-produced Neoclassical pottery, so spreading the style nationwide. Kathryn Hughes commented that 'The real function of a middle-class wife was to display her husband's financial success by stocking her home with material possessions - what's been called the "paraphernalia of gentility".'[744]

The demand for printed material and pictures grew exponentially. Thy were modestly priced, so allowing the prosperous middle classes to amass pictures and books.[745] Furthermore there were lending libraries offering access to the less affluent. One Charles Campbell, for example, 'Set aside a few pennies for a subscription library and joined a club of twelve men, mainly artisans and mechanics, to discuss literary topics.'[746] They were also an acceptable meeting place for women. For some the aim may have been the pursuit of knowledge, rather than worldly advancement. As well as libraries and coffee houses, the 'Penny Universities' were important as places of social intercourse, where newspapers might be read and contemporary issues debated (See *Figure 29.2*).[747] Entry was a penny, giving access

[743] G. Mingay, *English Landed Society in the Eighteenth Century* (Routledge, London, 1968), pp. 19–50. For details of specific collections see J. Coutu, *Then and Now: Collecting and classicism in Eighteenth-century England* (McGill University Press, Montreal, 2015).
[744] K. Hughes, A monograph, 'The Middle Classes: Etiquette and Upward Mobility' (British Library, May, 2014).
[745] J. Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination* (Chicago University Press, Chicago, 2006), p. 93.
[746] E. Lochrie, *A Study of Lending Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Strathclyde University, 2015), M.Sc. Dissertation.
[747] Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, pp. 34–40.

to coffee, wine, spirits, newspapers and serious conversation. Vic Gatrell has estimated that, overall, the groups described above accounted for 10% of London's population.[748]

Literacy was growing rapidly amongst the poorer sections of society. The number of schools teaching basic reading, writing and elementary mathematics for low fees was rapidly increasing, and post 1770 there was a general consensus that literacy aided rather than hindered the employability of workers of both sexes.[749] Religious movements played their part, with a focus on personal access to the Bible. Hannah Moore (1736–1811) and Robert Raikes (1745–1833) are famed as founders of the Sunday School movement. One estimate is that by 1785, 250,000 English children were attending them. Once Scripture became accessible, so too would newspapers and secular literature. The novel, in particular appealed to middle-class taste, in particular authors such as Lawrence Sterne (1713–1768) and Oliver Goldsmith (1728–1774), who both wrote in ways that would engage the newly literate.[750]

In relation to Hamilton, the middling people were significant in that avid reading and art collecting would make him known to this significant element in society who, while they might not have access to *AEGR,* could view or purchase images from *CEAV.* An interest in him beyond his narrow aristocratic circle increased as Emma's Attitudes, her portraits and the relationship with Nelson became widely known.

Public morality was a major concern to many in the late eighteenth century, together with a fear that the Enlightenment brought opinions which, if left

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[748] Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, pp. 6–7.
[749] D. Simonton, 'Schooling the Poor: Gender and Class in Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* (2008), pp. 5–9.
[750] J. Mullen, 'The Rise of the Novel', *Discovering Literature: Restoration & 18th century.* (British Library, 2018)
https://www.bl.uk/restoration-18th-century-literature/themes/rise-of-the-novel
Accessed, 10 07 2020

unchecked, would endanger Protestant Christianity. Alongside it was a concern about the permissive nature of contemporary society. The Evangelical Revival aspired to be the antidote to the perceived social and moral evils of the age by reasserting a personal faith and instilling a Christian discipline in individuals. Pressure groups were established with the aim of reforming what was considered immoral, with prostitution being a particular concern. John Brewer cites *An Essay on Polite Behaviour* (1740):

> A man must be master of himself, of his words gestures and passions, that nothing offensive may escape him to give others just occasion to complain of his proceedings.[751]

There was strong emphasis on the family as the base for the inculcation of moral principles, and regret that, in London at least, calm family life was frequently impossible.[752] The fear of societal breakdown increased subsequent to the French Revolution, which released a plethora of patriotic writing in defence of the Church, the Monarchy and the constitution, leading to the nation becoming more hostile to the culture of other countries.

For decades there had been a serious attempt by sections of the establishment in Britain to supress behaviour thought to be immoral. Such was the influence of the Evangelical Revival that George III was persuaded to give his Imprimatur to the aims of the Society for the Reformation of Manners.[753] His edict was titled *For the Encouragement of Piety and Virtue, and for the Preventing and Punishing of Vice, Profaneness and Immorality* (June 1st 1787). Within it were specific condemnations

[751] Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, p. 110.
[752] W. Gibson and J. Begiato, *Sex and the Church in the Long Eighteenth Century* (I.B. Taurus, London, 2017), p. 110. Full details of literary sources are given in E. Macleod, 'British Attitudes to The French Revolution', *The Historical Journal,* 50, 3, 2007), pp. 689–709.
[753] Rosman, *The Evolution of the English Churches,* p. 143; Gibson and Begiato, *Sex and the Church*, pp. 59–69.

of sexually explicit material and the suppression of 'Loose and licentious Prints, Books and Publications, dispersing Poison to the minds of the Young and Unwary and to Punish the Publishers and Vendors thereof'.[754] The flaw with the King's proclamation was that it gave no powers to seize materials, thus enabling book publishing and satirical prints to continue uncensored.

One consequence of these movements was expressed in a narrowing of what was morally acceptable. 'Respectable' women distanced themselves from male acquaintances. Gatrell quotes Mary Wollstonecraft, who stated that 'Chastity must universally prevail [and that] woman's first wish is to make herself respectable.'[755] Yet such behaviour was not universally accepted. Brewer quotes a contemporary commentator, who observed that 'Girls often go in groups to visit print shops that they may amuse themselves with prints that impart the most impure ideas.' (*See Figure 29.1*) The paradox is well expressed in Gatrell's chapter 'The Age of Cant', which illustrates the contradictions of liberality and conservatism abounding within society.[756] All the seven deadly sins are shown by the satirists as present amongst those who purported to maintain moral standards. Gillray's print of 1792, 'Vices Overlooked in the New Proclamation', insisted that 'Avarice, drunkenness, gambling and debauchery' pervaded all society.[757]

Insidiously, all these eighteenth-century tensions were to affect Hamilton. The demands for moral probity, when measured against his lifestyle, would allow some to construe him as one of the immoral elements against which the Proclamation was addressed.[758] Both *AEGR* and *CEAV* contained frequent depiction of the nude in

[754] *For the Encouragement of Piety and Virtue, and for the Preventing and Punishing of Vice, Profaneness and Immorality* (June 1, 1787).
[755]Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination*, pp.61–63.
[756] Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, Fig. 228, p. 475.
[757]British Museum. Accession No. 1851,0901.605
[758] See Chapter Five, 'Sir William Hamilton, Neoclassicism and Camp'.

contexts unacceptable to the reformers, even though in *CEAV* the imagery was considerably more restrained. Meanwhile, the teenage Amy Lyon, later Lady Emma Hamilton, was a living paradigm for the concerns of the moral reformers. *Circa* 1770, the Proclamation Society denounced Covent Garden as 'The great square of VENUS, and its purlieus are crowded with the practitioners of this Goddess. One would imagine that all the prostitutes in the Kingdom had decided on this neighbourhood.'[759] A few years later, Emma Hamilton was plying her trade there. She was never allowed to forget her sad adolescence. Decades later the satirical poet 'Peter Pindar', the pseudonym of John Wolcot (1738–1819), linked an aged Hamilton with his youthful bride's first years in London:

> If *his* to wicked wanderings can incline,
> Lord, who would answer, poor old Knight, for *thine*,
> Yet *should* thy Grecian Goddess fly the fane,
> I think that we may catch her in Hedge Lane.[760]

Although the Proclamation failed to have a major impact on society at large, it set a broad moral framework, with Sir William's life and work perceived by some as being outside its definition.

As has been noted, Wedgwood's mass production of relatively cheap ceramics with Neoclassical decoration circulated broadly across Britain.[761] By the same token, Londoners might visit the free British Museum which included the Hamilton Gallery, later presided over by Sir Joshua Reynolds's 1775 portrait of him (*Figure 25.1*).[762]

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[759] E. Burford, *Wits, Wenchers and Wantons – London's Low Life: Covent Garden in the Eighteenth Century* (R. Hale, London, 1986), p. 260.
[760] J. Walker, ed., *The Works of Peter Pindar* (London 1794), Vol. III, p. 187. Hedge Lane was a notorious centre of prostitution, near Covent Garden. 'Fane' is an archaic term for 'temple'.
[761] McKendrick, 'Josiah Wedgwood'.
[762] The star of the Bath appears on his maroon jacket. He is holding open *AEGR*, Vol. I, plate 71, which has a dedicatory inscription to Hamilton. Perhaps it is *AEGR* Vol. II that lies open on the floor. Hamilton insisted that David Allen's portrait of him was replaced in Montague House with that by Reynolds.

Here Hamilton's first vase collection, alongside his portrait, was on public display, allowing visitors to view the shapes of, and paintings on, the vases. Long before Emma Hamilton added to the public frisson, Hamilton was regarded as the doyen of them. The 'middling sort of people' would not have been able to contextualise them within the mores of the ancient Greeks. Inevitably some visitors, especially those with Evangelical leanings, would view them with distaste.

Hamilton remained the patrician throughout his years in Naples. There is no evidence to suggest that the opinions of lesser mortals concerned him, beyond his pleasure in knowing that Wedgwood and other craftsmen were raising the standards of Neoclassical design which he propagated, and that their products were circulating widely. For instance, in Naples his dealings with the majority *lazzaroni* class was solely on a transactional basis. They could carry his goods, lead him to unopened Etruscan tombs or, in the case of Bartolomeo Pumo, guide him up Vesuvius. When they rioted, his response, like others of his class, was to bolt his doors against them. He wrote about them with detachment and distain. An example is public reaction to a violent eruption of Vesuvius, when he observed that:

> The confusion at Naples this night cannot be described; his Sicilian Majesty's retreat from Portici added to the alarm; all the churches were opened and filled; the streets were thronged with processions of saints but I shall avoid entering upon a description of the various ceremonies that were performed in this capital to quell the fury of the turbulent mountain.[763]

Overall, Hamilton lacked empathy with the public at large. In his dealings with his Welsh estates, his interest was in increasing its financial return.[764] Nelson 'gave' Emma a woman of colour to act as her maid on his return from Egypt, whom Hamilton received with equanimity. When forced to leave Naples in June 1798, a

[763] William Hamilton, *Observations on Mount Vesuvius, Mount Etna and other Volcanoes*. (London, 1774), p. 31. Note that this book predated *Campi Phlegraei* by two years.
[764] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, pp. 275–276.

major concern of his was to ensure his art and antiquities collections were sent to London. Later, the staff at the Palazzo Sessa were simply abandoned.[765] Of the general population, there is no evidence that Hamilton had any concern about them.[766] Although in Britain societal opinions were changing rapidly, the Envoy remained blinkered, unperturbed or unaware of them.

The Second Vase Collection and its Publication

In the last decade of the eighteenth century, Hamilton made his second and largest vase collection, suggesting it was the greatest in the world: 'Never did, or will exist such another collection and as near as I can recollect, it has cost me £6,000 (£858,000).'[767] In retrospect, it lacked the esteem in which the first was held because it was not housed in the British Museum, but also because the presence of ancient vases in Britain was far greater than in the middle of the eighteenth century.[768] Even after the sale of the first collection there was never a period when Hamilton was without vases, as witnessed by their frequent use in Emma's Attitudes, which began prior to the second collection (*Figure 28*). In his household vases seem to have been dispensable. Kate Williams quotes Emma as exclaiming, 'Ah, Sir William, I've dropped me joug!'[769] It may be that Emma acted, *inter alia*, as a salesperson for vases, with Hamilton persuading visitors to purchase a vase after her performance. Goethe, himself a minor collector, had already observed the high prices being paid for Greek pots:

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[765] Ibid., p.259.
[766] This observation is based on reading Davis and Capuano, *The Hamilton Letters*, pp. 146–219.
[767] Hamilton to Charles Greville 4. 8. 1799.
[768] For example, many of Hamilton's second vase collections were purchased by Lord Leverhulme when Hope's collection was auctioned in 1918 and are displayed in the Lady Lever Art Gallery on the Wirral.
[769] Kate Williams, *England's Mistress: The Infamous Life of Emma Hamilton* (Random House, London, 2006).

> One now pays a lot of money for Etruscan vases, and certainly one finds beautiful and exquisite pieces among them. Every traveller wants one. People do not value their money so highly as at home, I was afraid that I should be tempted.[770]

Attention must be given to the publication of Hamilton's second vase collection, itself far more modest and less controversial than *AEGR.* Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein (1751–1829) is of particular significance in relation to it. From 1783 to 1799 he resided in Naples. During his last ten years there, he was director of the Accademia di Belle Arti di Napoli, a prestigious post. He was one of a family of artists and, because of his close friendship with Wolfgang Goethe, became known as the 'Goethe Tischbein'. He became friendly with Hamilton and lived with him for some time in the Palazzo Sessa. In his autobiographical *Italian Journey*, he praised the Envoy for his attitude to Greek vases and commented on him from a personal and positive viewpoint. From Tischbein, the reader is offered the clearest and most unbiased account of Hamilton and his actions during the publication process of the second vase collection:

> In Lord Hamilton I found a great patron and friend. Somewhat naturally this admirer and connoisseur of arts was one of the most excellent men in Naples. His house, where all people of taste crowded was decked with all kinds of art. Widely renowned is his collection of vases because he wanted to make the Greek art of painting universally known. *He had only a few at the beginning,* which he often showed to me with great pleasure, praising the simplicity and yet deeply emotional involvement of the artist in their creation.[771]

Seemingly Hamilton experienced a damascene moment as he began collecting vases once more. Tischbein wrote that 'One day he [Hamilton] came to me full of joy

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[770] Vickers, 'Value and Simplicity', pp. 103; The letter is dated 09 03 1787. The auotation is from Goethe, *Italienische Reise* (Hamburg, 1964), p. 197

[771] J.S. Tischbein, J. S Wilhelm, *Aus meinen Leben* (G.H. Schwetschse und Sohn, Braunswieg, 1861), p. 100. Translation by Herr Frederich Stephan.
Tischbein, J.,Aus Meinen Leben
https://books.google.de/books?id=huZEAQAAIAAJ&pg= Accessed 10 07 2020
NB. Tischbein's autobiography was not published until 1861.

telling me that he could not resist to start anew buying vases. The people digging for these vessels had obviously found a place where such objects were found in large numbers.'[772]

Tischbein gave a charming observation of Hamilton's deviation from social norms:

> Once I saw him, he had just come from Court, in full array with ribbon and star, carrying a basket full of vases. A ragged rascal was holding one handle of the basket and the English minister the other. . . The best place to find such objects was in the towns once inhabited by Greeks where they buried their dead. An entire collection was bought to him from Apulia by a priest.[773]

It can be assumed that Hamilton had purchased the vases from this 'ragged rascal' who was assisting the Envoy with their transport. The publication of the new collection was not long delayed: 'Thus within a short period quite a lot of vases came together and Hamilton expressed his wish to me to see some of them engraved in copper, with a short description added to them.'[774] Tischbein was appointed editor.

In terms of publication, Hamilton ensured that he was in control of the process, including the financial aspects of publication. Unlike Hancarville, Tischbein had no interest other than publishing the vases as Hamilton wished, with no financial responsibility. The artist used the occasion to benefit some of his impoverished students: '[Hamilton] would carry the costs in advance and he was convinced it would pay off once the plates were sold.' Tischbein wrote that 'This suggestion pleased me very much, for not only would the knowledge of the vases be widely propagated but could also help some students of mine who were not too well off, to earn a little.'[775]

The introduction to *CEAV* was written by Hamilton himself and demonstrates a profound knowledge of ancient vases in terms of their antecedents and the methods of painting. Yet in terms of the vase descriptions, Hamilton lacked the confidence to

[772] Ibid., pp. 120 and 175
[773] Ibid., p. 170.
[774] Ibid., p. 170.
[775] Ibid., p. 175

write them unaided. To assist him the Russian aristocrat, Andrei Yakovlevitch Italinsky (1743–1827), a noted classical scholar and the Russian Envoy to Naples, worked alongside Hamilton. Tischbein noted that 'The opus was the fruit of our mutual efforts concerning the vases that Hamilton bought in the course of time. Together with Italinsky he wrote the legends to my drawings. In fact, the Envoy admitted that his 'very learned Friend, Mr ltalinski, Counsellor of the Russian Embassy' was the main author while Hamilton confined himself to 'Short Explanations ... simple remarks as have occur'd to me from having been long conversant in such sort of antiquities, and having cast my eye over numerous books.'[776]

Unlike *AEGR,* Hamilton claimed authorship, but the exact meaning of the term requires clarification. He financed the project and wrote the introduction but relied on Italinsky for assistance with the descriptions, while Tischbein was the editor of the overall project, which included the production of the plates. Hamilton certainly gave Tischbein clear instructions regarding the prints. They relied on outline engravings, which ignored the contrast between light and dark areas. This new, 'truthful' style changed the manner in which the images were perceived by the viewer, as there was no reference to the shape of the original vase. Furthermore, each volume cost two and a half guineas (£250) which, although still a considerable outlay for young artists, was relatively inexpensive compared with the fifty guineas (£43,000) charged for *AEGR.* Three volumes were published in Hamilton's lifetime, with a fourth volume of 61 plates without text published by Tischbein after Hamilton's death.

[776] See Michael Turner, 'Sir William Hamilton and Dionysos: Modern Context, Ancient Meaning, Festschrift in Honour of J. Richard Green', *Mediterranean Archaeology* 17, 2004, p. 95.

Overall, it is reasonable to allow Hamilton to be described as author. He financed the project and determined which vases should be included. Furthermore, unlike Hancarville, Tischbein did not deviate from his employer's wishes over the illustrations. There is no evidence available to determine the percentage of the descriptions that can be ascribed to Hamilton and which to Italinsky. Perhaps they came to an agreement on the wording of each description. *CEAV* was published without the internecine strife which dogged the publication of *AEGR*. The work offered a further supply of images for artists to develop. *CEAV* has relevance to contemporary scholars. The images in the work predate the destruction of a large part of the vase collection, sunk off the Scilly Isles en route from Naples to London. As a consequence, many sherds from the vases, now recovered from the shipwreck, can be placed within the context provided by the vase drawings.[777] What is undeniable is that had Hamilton not been posted to Naples for so long, the richness of vase collections in Britain would have been much less. Hamilton's urge to collect continued unabated, as demonstrated in a letter he wrote to Greville in 1790, shortly after the discovery of the Etruscan necropoleis at Tarquinia and Cerveteri:

> I am sure that the mine of vases lately discovered must fail soon & therefore I have not let one essential vase escape me, tho' the price is much higher than it was formerly. The King of Naples has now begun to purchase them, but my harvest luckily was in first.[778]
>
> My new collection of vases will throw great light upon the ancient history and mythology of the Greeks, but they are a great treasure for artists. It is now beyond doubt that they are Greek and not Etruscan. I wish Wedgwood had this collection two years in his possession. He would profit much from them. [779]

[777] Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum, Great Britain Fascicule 20, the British Museum Fascicule 10: Fragments from Sir William Hamilton's Second Collection of Vases Recovered from the Wreck of HMS Colossus.
[778] Morrison, Letter 192, Hamilton to Greville, September 1791.
[779] Ibid. Hamilton to Greville, September 1790, Letter 185

The Envoy showed a surprising lack of consistency. At one level he viewed the purchase of antiquities by non-Italians as a tragedy, yet in the passage following his self-interest is clear:

> I think that Italy is in great danger of being completely plunder'd and ruin'd unless some unforeseen accident shou'd operate in its favour, and that very soon . . . What a pity that Italy shou'd be robb'd of its finest marbles, pictures & bronzes, which you see by what had happen'd at Parma [during the invasion by the French] will certainly be the case shou'd the French marauders advance ... I mean to sell my collection of vases [sic].[780]

Hamilton's fears were confirmed after Rome made a peace treaty with the French in 1798, observing that 'The Roman people are to be disarmed and all monuments of antiquity and art are to remain entirely at the French disposal.'[781] Considering that Hamilton had exported so many antiquities and art works, it is a statement of breath-taking self-unawareness.

When *CEAV* was published Hamilton was determined that the public should perceive him as the foremost scholar of ancient vases. Few who have read its preface could demure from this opinion. It dealt with the archaeological methods of the period, an analysis of vase origins and their primacy over statues as source material for ancient Greek study. Furthermore, it demonstrated that he favoured original vase imagery rather than covering up scenes that some might find distasteful. As previously mentioned, he was sincere in his belief that a cheap *catalogue raisonné* was to allow young, poor artists to have access to many accurate reproductions of Greek vase paintings.[782] Clearly cost was a major factor, both for Hamilton and for the less affluent purchasers, but the lack of overtly erotic images may indicate that Hamilton had developed some awareness of the changes in public attitude to the

[780] Ibid Hamilton to Greville, June 1792, Letter 282.
[781] National Archive. Diplomatic Papers 19.2.1798. Quoted in Davis and Capuano (2008), p. 76.
[782] *CEAV*, Vol. I., pp. 8–47.

sensual. Hamilton's relationship with Emma was celebrated by the frontispiece to *CEAV* Volume II, drawn by C.H. Kneip (1755–1825). Seemingly, Emma was present when Hamilton opened pristine Etruscan tombs (*See Figure 25.2*). Hamilton commissioned the image and pictorially reduced the age gap between his wife and himself, with the artist depicting him as a young man. The image further linked vases and Emma together in the public eye.

The Learned Societies of London and William Hamilton

Separate from the public angst regarding morals, manners, politics and literacy, the learned societies of London played an important role in Hamilton's public persona, both through private correspondence and regular communication with them even though he was in Naples.[783] Although the Societies had differing aims, their membership frequently overlapping which added to the camaraderie underlying their formal proceedings. It will be shown that Hamilton's membership of the Royal Society and the Society of Antiquaries was beneficial to his reputation, while his membership of the Society of Dilettanti, taken alongside their publication of his letter concerning the cult of Priapus, was further cause of his loss of public esteem.

The year 1772 was Hamilton's *annus mirabilis*, when his status was profoundly enhanced. Already a Fellow of the Royal Society, he was dubbed a Knight of the Bath and elected to the Society of Antiquaries. Five years later he became a member of the Society of Dilettanti. From obscurity he had become a significant figure within society and academia. The Knighthood was not unexpected. His predecessor, Sir James Gray (1708–1773), was a Knight of the Bath, as was Sir Horace Mann (1706–1786), Hamilton's counterpart in Florence. The honour was conferred on Hamilton in

[783] Alfred Morrison's *Collection of Autograph Letters and Historical Documents* (1893) bear testimony to this.

1772. It was an expensive matter, costing him £1,200 (£175,000), yet It enhanced his status considerably.[784]

'The President, Council and Fellows of the Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge', commonly known as the Royal Society, was the most prestigious of the learned societies, and enjoyed high public regard. Hamilton's election was based on the letters that were later published as *Campi Phlegraei*. Elected in 1767, his pride in membership was shown in many of Hamilton's published works, where he appends his honours as 'FRS' after 'KB'. Decades later Hamilton was elected to the Royal Society's Council, even chairing a meeting in the absence of their President, Sir Joseph Banks, in 1800. As with the other learned societies, he made gifts to them, the most notable being the Diaries of Father Antonio Piaggio, his recorder of Vesuvius' volcanic activities. It was donated in 1800.

A second, highly respectable learned society, the Society of Antiquaries, added to Hamilton's scholarly reputation. Like the Royal Society its aims were uncontroversial, with a mission statement that 'The business of the Society shall be limited to the study of antiquities.' Five years after his election in 1777, Hamilton, ever anxious to please, provided them with a detailed account of the excavations at Pompeii, dominated by annotated engravings of the site. Its illustrations are cold and factual, with no hint of eroticism (*See Figure 8*). The title page was far from self-effacing, continuing Hamilton's predisposition to ensure his name remained in the academic limelight.

> Account of the Discoveries at Pompeii communicated to the Society of Antiquaries of London by The Hon. SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON, Knight of the Bath, ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY and PLENIPOTENTIARY from HIS MAJESTY to the COURT of Naples.

[784] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 66.

It was an important contribution, allowing those not able to visit the site to gain an insight into what had been excavated and how Pompeii appeared at the time of its publication. Hamilton's membership of the Society of Antiquaries undoubtedly built his reputation in the field further. His regard for the Society was shown by his dedication of *CEAV* to them.

The highly respected Royal Society and the Society of Antiquaries were in direct contrast with the Society of Dilettanti, regarded with deep suspicion by many. Their motto was *seria ludo,* 'To take serious matters in a light-hearted spirit', which adequately summed up the nature of the organisation. In the early decades of the eighteenth century the Dilettanti's reputation was far more *ludo* than *seria.* In 1743 Horace Walpole condemned its affectations and described it as: 'A club, for which the nominal qualification is having been in Italy, and the real one, being drunk: the two chiefs are Lord Middlesex and Sir Francis Dashwood, who were seldom sober the whole time they were in Italy.'[785]

Many early members, such as Francis Dashwood, 11th Baron Le Despencer (1708–1781), led notorious lives. Until 1760 Dashwood was a member of the infamous Hell Fire Club, whose ribald 'communion' with Greek gods caused scandal amongst the Christian community (See *Figure 26*). Such men might be considered the anti-heroes of the Evangelical movement. Even so, it did not prevent Dashwood from rising to high political office as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Sir James Gray, Hamilton's predecessor at Naples, was another founder member, with Hamilton joining them in 1777. Scandal was always more newsworthy than scholarship, as the two paintings of Dashwood and Hamilton demonstrate (*Figure 26*). As the century moved forward,

[785] Horace Walpole, quoted in Black, *The British and the Grand Tour*, p .120.

it was the *seria* rather than the *ludo* that prevailed. Members such as Hamilton, Richard Payne Knight (1751–1824) and Charles Townley (1737–1805) were serious scholars, even though their interest in vase paintings and priapic research was unlikely to gain favour during the Evangelical Revival. Although much reformed, the Dilettanti continued to have a negative reputation in the second half of the eighteenth century. Yet the membership included many of Hamilton's friends, and his lack of empathy with the mood of the general public prevented him perceiving potential problems in this regard. Each member of the Society of Dilettanti was required to commission a self-portrait on election, with members choosing their own theme for their image (*Figure 20*). The contrast between Dashwood's suggestive portrait and that of the serious Hamilton demonstrated the Dilettanti's change in emphasis between 1740 and 1778. The Dilettantti was for the aristocracy, but for the majority masquerades such as those at the Vauxhall pleasure gardens were reaching their acme of popularity for the proletariat and were equally condemned as decadent by the Evangelical churches.[786] The Dilettanti of the early eighteenth century acted out their own masquerade. Francis Dashwood's image remains a good example of the 'Libertine Group' of early portraits. His given name is parodied by the Franciscan monk's habit, while the communion cup he holds is engraved with the name of his country seat, West Wycombe Park (See *Figure 26.1*). Yet it is not the Last Supper that is celebrated, but the genitalia of the Venus de Medici emphasised by the light shining across her. The statue has been remodelled to remove its protective left hand, while Knapton's use of light suggests Dashwood's communion is with Venus

[786] Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, pp. 64–67; Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, p. 207.

herself. For many, it was both impious and heretical. Small wonder that the Dilettanti were viewed in their early years with shock and suspicion.[787]

On the right side of *Figure 26* the portrait Hamilton chose on joining the Society is shown. Painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, it demonstrated the conflict between jollity and scholarship. Sir William was the most mature of the company. His gaze is serous and intent. Predictably he is painted with *AEGR* and an olpe in front of him. The observers are divided into two groups. Four men are taking scant interest in Hamilton's discourse, but two are clearly engaged. The artist was surely attempting to display the old and the new. *Ludo* is expressed in the drinking and the phallic gesture of the President, while *seria* lies within Sir William and the two engaged persons. Hamilton's image represents the new generation of Dilettanti. He was an active member, particularly after his recall from Naples. His name was associated with the Society and its scandalous representation to the community at large, while the vase in the picture together with the open copy of *AEGR* firmly linked the Envoy's Greek vases with the Dilettanti. As the eighteenth century progressed, it became clear that there were significant differences between the reputable archaeological works of the Dilettanti and the jocular and sexually charged atmosphere within its private discourse.

Of all the works associated with Hamilton, none was more likely to inflame public opinion than the pamphlet printed under the auspices of the Society of Dilettanti in 1782.[788] Sir William's name and the letter he wrote privately to Payne Knight featured prominently on its title page, together with prurient images. While on

[787] B. Redford, *Dilettanti, the Antic and the Antique in Eighteenth- Century England.* (Getty Museum, Los Angeles, 2008), p. 33.
[788] R. Payne Knight, *A discourse on the worship of Priapus, and its connection with the mystic theology of the ancients*. (Privately printed, 1786). The Greek lettering beneath the phallic cockerel translates as 'Saviour of the World'.

furlough, the Envoy had read aloud to the Dilettanti his temperate and interesting account of the phallic cult in St Como's Cathedral, Isernia, 50 miles from Naples.[789] The infertile purchased a phallus shaped loosely as a 'big toe' and then prayed to St Cosmo for pregnancy. Hamilton brought samples for the Fellowship to view. A further chapter, in French and not authored by him, stated that the childless spent nights in the Cathedral with the Canons and that consequent pregnancies were considered miracles. Private ribaldry led to Lord Pembroke writing that 'I should like to see our matrons handling the big toe of Santo Cosmo.'[790] Privately Hamilton enjoyed double entendre. In a letter to Sir Joseph Banks he wrote:

> Greville will have told you that I have actually discovered the Cult of Priapus in full vigour . . . I mean to send the Ex voti & a faithful description of the annual fete of St Cosmo's Great Toe (for the phallus is so called, although it is exactly the same thing) to Solander in the B, Museum to be placed near the ancient ones. That your Great Toe and your purse may never fail you is the wish of Dr . . . .[791]

It is simplistic to view the pamphlet as anti-clerical and homosexual, although its images are sensationalist, perhaps to add the *ludo* to *seria*, thus maintaining the twin aspects of the Society's *raison d'être.* The pamphlet's contents were objective, intended as a scholarly scientific work of the Enlightenment, with circulation restricted to learned societies, the universities and selected individuals. Yet soon after publication its contents became more widely known. In one sense it followed Hancarville's text in *AEGR* on the origins of art, by exploring those of religious practice. Knight philosophised that:

> The female organs of generation were revered as symbols of the generative powers of nature as the males were of the generative powers of God. . . There is naturally no impurity or licentiousness in the moderate and regular

[789] The decision to publish it was made at a meeting of the Dilettanti on March 6, 1784. Pembroke to Hamilton, May 1, 1781. (Pembroke Papers, 1780–1794).
[790] Pembroke to Hamilton, May 1, 1781. (Pembroke Papers, 1780–1794).
[791] Hamilton to Banks, 17 8 1781 (BL. Add. Ms. 34048, Folio 15). The name of the Doctor is not given.

> gratification of any natural appetite; the turpitude consisting wholly in the excess of perversion.[792]

It was not a view that would gain wide public support as the mores of the age changed.

Hamilton's contribution was in stark contrast with Knight's overall analysis, as Hamilton began it with a polemic against Roman Catholicism: 'I thought it a circumstance worth recording; particularly, as it offers a fresh proof of the similitude of the Popish and Pagan Religion.'[793] Hamilton's role in Payne Knight's book is factual and modest, unlike the images it contains. However serious and scholarly the intention, the Dilettanti brotherhood might still evoke the earlier homosocial camaraderie of its members. Jason Kelly's opinion is that 'The idea of Priapus quickly turned these public men of science into public schoolboys, and they took pleasure impressing one another with their puns and double entendres.' [794]

Hamilton's membership of the Dilettanti had scholarly intentions and were recognised as such by many friends. The inuendo in his letter to Banks was a private illustration of the phallic humour in learned circles. The reception of aspects of his work in less permissive assemblies was seen as demonstrating that those in high places used their time to explore issues that their critics saw as scandalous.

There is a connection between the satirists, the Dilettanti and the mocking of Sir William and Emma, particularly by Thomas Rowlandson, James Gillray and Isaac Cruikshank (1764–1811). Sometimes overlooked was the moral and intellectual content in the satirists work as they attacked the Dilettanti in general and occasionally the Hamilton circle in particular. Jonathan Swift equated the 'Ravishers'

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[792] Payne Knight, *A Discourse on the Worship of Priapus*, p. 14.
[793] Ibid., p. 4.
[794] Kelly, *The Society of Dilettanti*, p. 251.

in *Gulliver's Tales* with Dilettanti tastes.[795] A generation later, Reverend Thomas Cole attacked the Dilettanti, commenting that 'The virtuoso arts are giving their instructions on how to gratify the lust of the eyes and display the pride of life. . . [they are] more likely to administer to vice, than to promote the practice of virtue.'[796] The Dilettanti justified their collections as examples of outstanding artistic taste. Yet the volume of nude statues and ancient vases they owned were sometimes regarded as the sexualised gaze of a small clique of aristocrats, as will be seen in contemporary satirists' output.

The public perception of collectors was ambivalent. They might have been perceived either as a subset of polite learning or as a sexualised hoarding activity. *Figure 27* is an instructive example, illustrating Rowlandson's antipathy to collectors while, at the same time, failing to end his fascination with the Hamiltons and Nelson, even after the Admiral's death. The figure in the mummy-case must be the deceased Nelson together with the now ample Emma. There is a frisson of erotica as the departed fondles the lady's ample rump. Sir William may well be the long dead gnome-like figure seen centre right. There is the statue, in Egyptian dress, centre right, perhaps Adonis. It referenced the Dilettanti's love of the nude, while the plethora of vases above the figures are distinctly Greek. However, the melange of Egyptian, Greek and Roman objects presented demonstrated Rowlandson's lack of classical knowledge. The print purports to satirise the craze for all things Egyptian which followed Nelson's victory at the Battle of the Nile in 1798. Yet above the pseudo-Egyptian figures and objects, the highest shelves are filled with Greek-style vases. The overarching impression left by Rowlandson was that the Dilettanti were a morally suspicious group functioning within a misogynistic culture.

[795] Ibid., p.29.
[796] T. Cole, *Sermon on Luxury Infidelity and Enthusiasm* (London, 1764), pp. 30–31.

Had Amy Lyon not become Lady Hamilton, Sir William would have been viewed in retirement as a scholar of antiquities, a vase and fine art connoisseur, and as a natural philosopher. As will be seen, such praise may not have been given to his diplomatic talents. Even so, without Emma, interest in ancient vases and Greek imagery would have been less. She has her own place in classical reception. It is unnecessary to repeat the sexual abuse she received as a very young prostitute, except to note that she learned theatrical skills when working in Drury Lane and erotic dancing in the 'Temple of Health'.[797]. She was George Romney's (1734–1802) muse and her image was painted by many artists during her teens and twenties.[798]

Her arrival at Naples in 1786 did not of itself cause scandal. Emma was accompanied by her mother and initially they were housed in separate quarters, apart from Sir William. It was the manner in which Hamilton developed and displayed her that caused the notoriety. Before Naples, Emma's life was one of personal survival, dominated by men whose interest in her was largely sexual. She arrived at the Palazzo Sessa still in ignorance of her trafficking between nephew and uncle. Although Sir William treated her kindly, she remained an object of desire for him both physically and through her brilliance in performance. Her resilience was exceptional, and Hamilton became obsessed with her immediately, as Emma herself recorded:

> You do not know how good Sir Wiliam is to me. . . He as never dined out since I came here; and endead, to speake to truth , he is never out of my sight. He breakfasts dines supes, and is constantly by me looking on my face. I cannot stir a hand leg or foot but he is is marking it as graceful and fine. I am sorry to say it, he loves me now as ever he could Lady Bolingbroke. . . But I belong to you Greville and to you only will I belong [sic].[799]

[797] See *Figure 28.2,* left.
[798] Colville and Williams, *Emma Hamilton*, Chapter 2.
[799] Morrison, Letter 150, Emma Hart to Charles Greville, Naples, 30 04 1786.

Emma was flattered but concerned by Hamilton's actions, while his manic attention to her heralded a major reason for his eventual downfall. Her lack of personal stability, resulting from her dysfunctional childhood was unsurprising. But whereas Hamilton's first wife, Catherine, who was of a similar age and education to him, offered mutual affection and socially equal status, it could not be expected from the 21-year-old abused Emma. The assumption must be that in reality she was a mass of contradictions lacking a firm moral compass. Yet she must have been aware that unless she married Hamilton, he could end the relationship at will.

Emma's Attitudes are important, leading to her becoming '[a] key figure in the imagination of poets and artists making her [significant] in the fusion of Neoclassicism with sensibility'.[800] Emma would have witnessed many women acting various roles during her London years. She had arrived in Naples with skills as a model and dancer. Hamilton further developed her talents by ensuring she was further trained in languages, singing and dancing by the best tutors that Naples could provide. Hamilton moulded her mime to his own satisfaction, to enhance Neoclassicism and probably to increase his trade in ancient vases. Melisima Trench, who witnessed her performance *circa* 1800, noted that 'She disposes the shawls around her so as to form Greek, Turkish and other imagery as well. She also has a variety of turbans. [It is] absolutely sleight of hand and she does it so quickly and easily.' [801] Together with her long hair and the turban she was transformed into an almost a theatrical curtain. After Rehberg's prints were published in London, the *Morning Post* commented that 'Lady Hamilton's Attitudes are at last made public.'[802] Hamilton had indeed created his own Galatea, with his role that of Pygmalion,

[800] Colville and Williams, *Emma Hamilton*, p. 139.
[801] Ibid, p. 146
[802] *Morning Post*, November 18, 1797.

dancing to her whims. Emma's Attitudes were famed Europe-wide, with a German porcelain factory creating a dinner service with Rehberg's images of the performance on every piece, and the majority displaying a Greek vase.[803] In a newspaper letter from a visitor to the Palazzo Sessa in 1786 Hamilton's compulsive obsession with Emma was made clear:

> The Attitudes are framed . . . by the aging gentleman connoisseur, Sir William Hamilton. This living statue seems the last and best of his collection. Her performance functions as a final consummation of his tasteful connoisseurship, as a lifetime's knowledge of nature, art and antiquity is enacted before his eyes.[804]

Emma's chaotic background was well known, while her notoriety was already assured through gossip, the many portraits of her and news of her famous Attitudes. Like Sir William, she was an accomplished networker and after her marriage she became a favourite of Queen Maria Carolina. Even so, Hamilton used her as a performance artist to entertain his multitudes of guests and embellish his reputation in the world of high art. Her miming performances for those visiting the Palazzo Sessa would become known to an even wider group after the Grand Tourists, who had been entertained by Sir William, told of their experiences after their return home. As noted earlier, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) visited Hamilton in 1786, witnessed the Attitudes, and was clearly impressed. Goethe's description of Emma's performance is well known, and concludes with a pertinent comment: 'Her elderly knight holds the torches for her performance and is absorbed in his soul's desire.'[805] More instructive is the observation by Elizabeth Vigée-Lebrun (1755–1842), who painted Emma's portrait several times:

> Nothing was more curious than the faculty that Lady Hamilton had acquired of suddenly imparting to all her features the expression of sorrow or joy, and of

[803] Colville and Williams, *Emma Hamilton*, pp. 158 and 159.
[804] *Public Advertiser*, September 9, 1786.
[805] A. James and W. Morrison, trans., *The Works of J. W. von Goethe*, Vol. 12. Letters from Italy, part VII, Naples. Caserta, March 16, 1787.

> posing in a wonderful manner in order to represent different characters. Her eyes alight with animation, her hair strewn about her, she displayed to you a delicious bacchanale, then all at once her face expressed sadness, and you saw an admirable repentant Magdalene.[806]

Emma developed the bacchanale theme in the dance with which she is associated, the tarantella. Some contemporaries attempted to trace it back to ancient Rome. Nathaniel Wraxall (1751–1831) witnessed Emma's stamina in 'outdancing' Hamilton and three others in this physically demanding performance. He made an interesting statement at the conclusion of his description:

> We must recollect that the two performers are supposed to be a satyr and a nymph, or rather, a Fawn and a Bacchant. It was certainly not of a nature to be performed, except before a select company as the screams, attitudes, starts and embraces with which it is intermingled gave it a peculiar character.[807]

Here Emma's image of being both exotic and sensual are emphasised.

Emma's Attitudes are well known, but the manner in which they became associated with ancient vases is less obvious. Images of Emma, particularly those by Rehberg, show the substantial number of Greek vases used in her performances: phialae, dinoi, kraters, oinochoai and squat lekythoi all feature (*Figure 28.1 & 2*).[808] By such means, the identification of Emma, Sir William and ancient ceramics became even further intertwined. Previous reference has been made to Hamilton's financial difficulties. He was in constant need of additional funds and the casual sale of vases, perhaps inspired by Emma's Attitudes, would be one means of earning money.

There was a further identification of Emma with both classical antiquity and eroticism. She became a fashion icon across Europe. Mid eighteenth-century clothing emphasised elaborate, multi-layered dresses with a focus on the waist,

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[806] Lionel Strachey, *Memoirs of Madam* Vigée *Lebrun* (New York 1903). https://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/lebrun/memoirs/memoirs.html#V (Accessed 01 09 2019).
[807] Wheatley, *Wraxall's Historical and Posthumous Memoirs* in *Quarterly Review,* p. 196.
[808] A modern attempt to recreate Emma's Attitudes can be found at: https://www.rmg.co.uk/discover/behind-the-scenes/blog/recreating-emma-hamiltons-attitudes (Accessed 26. 7. 2018).

reflecting society at the conclusion of the Rococo period. Neoclassicism swept this away, reducing female clothing to a corset, chemise and gown, not wholly dissimilar to the classical Greek himation and peplos (See *Figure 28.2*). Images from AEGR gave credence to this style as appropriate to the surge in public interest in Neoclassicism.[809] Often in light colours, the clothing was now focused higher, just below the bosom. Emma's natural hair style replaced the towering wigs of the first half of the century. Her *robe à la Grecque* became the fashion rage of her time, both in Britain and on the Continent.[810] By 1790 Emma and Sir William were established figures in the world of art, and in this respect it is hard to separate them. Vases, pictures, Emma's Attitudes and fashion merge as a kaleidoscope of esoteric material, fascinating many but, for the Evangelicals, a paradigm of dangerous practices.

From Notoriety to ridicule: Sir William and Emma, 1791–1803

Emma had stern critics as well as fans. Partly, these were based on class prejudice, and in particular the fact that Emma never lost her Lancashire accent and made indiscrete comments which some regarded as unsuitable for her role as Lady Hamilton. In her later years she became obese, frequently commented on by others who were sympathetic to Sir William and appalled at the way she humiliated him in public by her focus on Nelson (See *Figure 30*). After Hamilton was recalled to London, she was installed in the Admiral's new home, Merton Place, acting as if she remained in the Palazzo Sessa, although now mistress of ceremonies to Lord Nelson rather than her husband. A letter from Lord Minto (1782–1859) affirmed the fears of Hamilton's cultivated friend:

> She looks ultimately to the chance of marriage as Sir W will not be there long . . . She is in high looks, but more immense than ever. She goes on trowelling

[809] An example can be found in *AEGR,* Vol. III, plate 62.
[810] Colville and William, *Emma Hamilton*, pp. 145–147.

> Nelson with trowelfuls of flattery which he goes on taking as quietly as a child does pap. The love she makes to him is disgusting.[811]

There were two major sources from which the literate public formed their opinions of the Hamiltons. First the number of London and provincial newspapers had expanded during the second half of the eighteenth century, covering topics which included home news, foreign dispatches, court news, advertisement and gossip.[812] Second, although access to satirical prints was less widespread, cheap copies were available, festooned in print shops (*Figure 29.1*). Much of what follows is based on the *Burney Collection of 18th Century Newspapers*, which includes 601 references to Hamilton.[813] They offer an overall perception of him, not through friends, enemies or admirers, but through journalistic reports of events in his life, the Court Circular, comments about him and advertisements for his various publications. Although it could never be claimed that the press was objective, their comments on Sir William and Emma were far less prurient than those of the printmakers, whose aim was to sell images based on current topics of interest, presented in the most cynical manner.

Hamilton's career can be traced through the newspapers. During his early years in Naples, they focussed on the vase collection and his volcanology. One example reads that 'I congratulate my Country upon the Acquisition of the Etruscan treasure of Sir William Hamilton. Had we lost them we should have stepped back towards barbarism.'[814] The article is signed 'A. B. C. Dario', presumably a *nom de plume.* Hamilton's election to the Council of the Society of Antiquaries in 1772 was recorded in the London-based *Public Advertiser.*[815] Close on its heels, his membership of the

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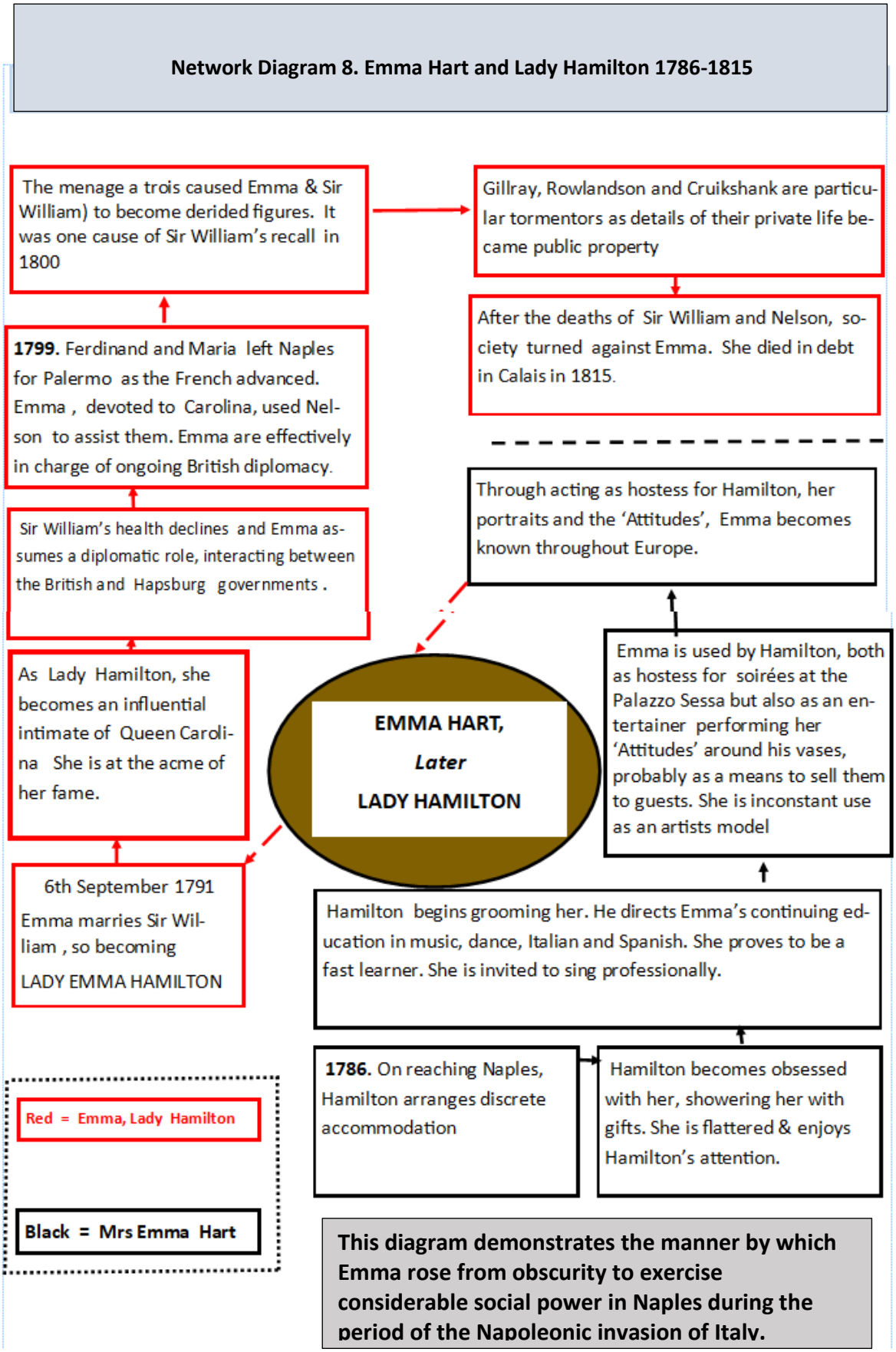
[811] J. Russell, *Nelson and the Hamiltons* (London, 1969), p. 254.
[812] J. Black, 'The Press and Politics in the Eighteenth Century', *Media History*, 8, 2, 2002.
[813] Burney collection of Newspapers, *The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century* (British Library).
[814] *Public Advertiser*, London, March 17, 1772.
[815] Ibid.

Council of the Royal Society was also mentioned.[816] Adding to his honours, the *London Gazette* noted his receiving the Order of the Bath in the same year.[817] Many references can be found relating to his work on volcanology, with further comments on his musical interests.[818]

[816] *Bingley's Journal*, April 25, 1772.
[817] *London Gazette*, June 16, 1772.
[818] For example, *The Morning Post and Advertiser*, February 1, 1780 and *Public Advertiser,* July 22, 1791.



Hamilton was less headline news in the following decade, although diplomatic papers received from Naples are gazetted, together with advertisements from

booksellers both for *Campi Phlegraei* and *AEGR*. The *London Gazette* noted his diplomatic correspondence, audiences with King George, and positions within learned societies. The focus on Hamilton's private life began when it appeared that Emma Hart might become Lady Hamilton. Home on furlough in 1791, Sir William sponsored a musical evening in the Haymarket Theatre in which Emma performed as an operatic virtuoso:

> Sir William Hamilton is particularly fond of [this] species of entertainment. Mrs Hart, his favourite fair, excels in that accomplished trait and has been offered the same [financial] terms as Signora Bauti [the prima donna].[819]

As rumours of marriage to Emma continued, the *Public Advertiser* became more cynical about the relationship:

> Mrs Harte, the fair Eleve of Sir William Hamilton has been introduced to the family of her protector previous to her walk with him to the *Temple of Hymen*. The bridal habiliments are in great forwardness, and the happy Baronet seems to think that the *honeymoon* will not be obscured until the end of his days.[820]

The marriage was a subject of prurient gossip in many newspapers. In comparison with the satirists, there was even occasional positive coverage.

> We know of no lady who would better become the title [of Lady Hamilton] . . . Several ladies of the first fashion have been to visit her and many, more squeamish had longed for the opportunity to meet, perhaps, the most accomplished woman in England . . . It is no discredit to this lady to say her origin was mean and that she was snatched from dangerous habits of life through the protection of Sir William Hamilton at Naples.[821]

The early years of the last decade of the eighteenth century showed Emma at her apogee. It was the decade when, diplomatically, Naples became a significant Embassy in relation to French aggression and the newspapers tended to focus on the political agenda. Yet the final years in Naples witnessed the fall of the Hamilton's

[819] *Public Advertiser*, July 22, 1791.
[820] Ibid., August 24, 1791.
[821] Ibid., September 23, 1791.

public esteem. The satirists ensured that the *ménage à trois* between the Hamiltons and Nelson became public property, leading to them becoming figures of national scandal (*See Figure 30, 1 & 2*). Within the realms of scholarship, Sir William remained a respected Trustee of the British Museum and continued to serve on the Councils of the Royal Society and the Society of Dilettanti.[822]

While keeping a mistress evoked little outrage, a British aristocrat marrying a woman known to have been a teenage prostitute generated no sympathy from the upper classes. Even though Hamilton had the Sovereign's assent to the marriage, the Archbishop of Canterbury denied his request for a special licence for a private ceremony. The wedding itself, solemnised in September 1791, was low key, with the couple leaving for Naples as soon as possible afterwards, indicating that Hamilton felt some qualms about its wisdom. Why he married her is unknown, as there was no obvious need for it. They had no children and the bond between them was not based on the mutual interests or respect that characterised his previous marriage to Catherine Hamilton. Emma's persistence and Sir William's obsession with her must surely have been salient factors. One unfortunate consequence was that figured antiquities and ancient vases became a trope for moral laxity when associated with Sir William and Lady Hamilton. The satirists' field for attack was widened after Emma had thrown herself at Nelson in Naples.

The Satirists' Gaze: A Study of Sir William, Lady Emma Hamilton and Admiral Nelson[823]

The Satirists output was extensive and included a small number of prints focussing on Sir William and Lady Hamilton together with Admiral Nelson. They are to be found illustrating most books examining the trio. As such their importance is

[822] *General Evening Post*, November 2, 1800.
[823] See Figures 25.1, 27 and 30.

heightened in relation to the multiplicity of satirical prints of the period. (*See Figure 29.1)*. A number of factors contributed to the flourishing of visual satire in late-eighteenth-century Britain. The rivalry between Whigs and Tories stimulated a desire from both political parties to satirise each other.[824] Furthermore, Britain enjoyed a relatively free press. The quality of the art of the satirists and their personal motivation is a study in itself, shedding light on the effectiveness of the cartoons they produced.

It was inevitable that when a 61-year-old distinguished natural philosopher, antiquary and diplomat chose to wed a 26-year-old famous beauty with a dubious reputation the couple would be targeted. Emma as a mistress was one thing, but to become Lady Hamilton crossed boundaries. At the time of their marriage several satirical prints featuring them appeared. One, *The Consular Artist*, displayed Emma in a roundel as an example of the Venus de Medici, with Sir William alongside her in a separate image.[825] A further illustration, titled 'The Diplomatic Lover and the Queen of Attitudes', appeared in the *Bon Ton Magazine.* In it, Sir William, on his knees, appears to propose marriage to the dominating figure of Emma. [826] There was no hint of eroticism in either cartoon.

At the time of Nelson's involvement with Emma the satire hardened, becoming prime material for an entire generation of satirists. Their attack took three forms. Firstly and most obviously was the misogynistic assault on Emma as a performance artist. Secondly, she was viewed interacting in a male-dominated political sphere

[824] Haywood, Ian, *Romanticism and Caricature*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press), 2013. Chapter 3 demonstrates the importance of politics in the production of caricatures.
[825] A. Hamilton, *Town and Country Magazine* (London, 1790): XXII, 'Histories of the Tête à Tête', p. 483; XXXII, 'The Venus de Medici' and XXXIII 'The Consular Artist'.
[826] *Bon Ton Magazine*, October 1 1791. British Museum online, 'The Diplomatic Lover and the Queen of Attitudes. (Accessed 22.07.2018).

with Sir William and Lord Nelson (*Figure 30.3*). Finally, the venom against her was revisited at a time when she was a sick and desperate woman, six years after Hamilton's death (*Figure 30.4*). A common feature of the satirical sketches is the way in which Greek vases are woven into the narrative.

Emma's Attitudes, although including a degree of sensualism, were never prurient, as Goethe's detailed description made clear. Rowlandson's *Lady H******* Attitudes* (*Figure 30.1*) remains the most famous depiction of Emma objectified, but it was not the only one. In it she was simply an object of desire for men, stripped of any intellect and personality, a concept that was patently untrue, a travesty of reality. A nude and beautiful young woman is displayed. She is linked directly with Greek vases, her right foot resting on a kantharos which might equally be understood as a chamber pot. Those surrounding and lusting after her may well represent the cognoscenti of the age, perhaps including Sir William. Rowlandson turned the shawl used in Emma's Attitudes into the typical Greek garment that framed male nude statues, but in this case emphasised a false wanton nakedness. Emma was not allowed the implied modesty in fourth-century BCE nude female statues. In this print she became the personification of misogynistic objectification of women, chosen because aspects of her life challenged the male sphere.

The famous Gillray cartoon*, Dido in Despa*ir (*Figure 30.2*) requires close analysis. Emma was no longer the beauty of *Lady H******* Attitudes*, but was now gross and pregnant. Apart from the decrepit Hamilton seemingly comatose in the bedroom, there are further disparaging details in the print, linking Hamilton's antiquarian studies with Nelson as well as Emma's pregnancy. Lying next to the ruined phallic objects to the front right of the print, an open book has the title *Antiquities of Herculaneum, Naples and Caprea* etc, while on the right-hand page a satyr chases a nude female. The blue scarf on the floor is inscribed 'Hero of the Nile'. The volume

on the window seat was titled *Studies of Academic Attitudes taken from Life*. The image assumes an obese woman, mitigated somewhat by Emma's pregnancy at the time of its publication. It was a competent 'hatchet job' on the trio. As if the meaning was not sufficiently self-explanatory, beneath the title are four lines of mocking verse:

> Ah, where, & ah where, is my gallant Sailor gone? –
> He's gone to Fight the Frenchmen, for George upon the Throne,
> He's gone to Fight ye Frenchmen, t'loose t'other Arm & Eye,
> And left me with the old Antiques, to lay me down, & Cry.

As will be seen later in the chapter, Emma played a significant role in Neapolitan diplomacy between 1798 and 1800. Isaac Cruikshank insisted on parodying the fact (*Figure 30.3*). Published in 1801, prior to Emma's pregnancy, his *A Mansion House Treat or Smoking Attitudes* displayed Emma dressed *à la Grecque*, smoking a pipe beside Nelson. The other distinguished males present are the Lord Mayor of London and Prime Minister Pitt. The text balloons above them are replete with double entendre. Emma's comment is 'Pho, the old man's [Hamilton] pipe is always out, but yours burns with full vigour'. Nelson replies, 'I'll give you such a smoke, I'll pour a whole broadside into you.' Emma was thus featured within an elite political gathering, not offering diplomatic advice to the august company, but once again reduced to a sexual object in a man's world. As will be seen, the image is a parody of the truth concerning Emma's actual diplomatic role in Naples. Nelson did not escape unscathed from the satirists' wit. Rowlandson produced an image of Nelson depicted as an ancient Greek hydria which had the inscription *From Sir William Hamilton's*

Collection.[827] In this case ancient vases, and strong hints at the scandalous relationship between Nelson, Emma and Sir William were neatly threaded together.

The famous image of a decrepit Hamilton as *A Cognoscenti contemplating ye Beauties of ye Antique* (*Figure 25.*1) was intent on destroying Hamilton's reputation. Long gone were the glory days in Naples. He was now perceived as a senile old man gazing abstractedly at distinctly unpleasant antiquities, similar to those depicted in *Dido in Despair*. The portraits on the walls are titled *Cleopatra*, *Mark Anthony* and *Claudius*, both men famously seduced by a woman, so linking Emma, Sir William and Nelson with classical characters who were suitable targets for satirists in this context. The smoking image of Vesuvius further links the classical figure with the Hamilton trio, and might itself be perceived as phallic. Antiquities and vases melded into an unpleasant collage of the three actors in the Nelson and Emma scandal.

Although Sir William might engage his libido, acting the role of Pygmalion enjoying Galatea, Emma was far from the placid mistress, being outspoken, clever and manipulative. She used these skills effectively and proved an able mistress of ceremonies at the Palazzo Sessa. Such a positive curriculum vitae was utterly ignored. The satirists' misogyny in general, and their specific contempt for a low-bred woman who had burst through the 'glass ceiling', caused her genuine achievements to be eradicated in their gaze. After her lovers' decease, Emma bore the brunt of the attacks. The Government refused to honour her husband's legitimate expenses, while those who had previously been overt admirers while secretly jealous of Emma turned upon her. The satirists' contribution to Hamilton's downfall was significant, but even more so for Emma. Nelson emerged relatively

[827] Royal Greenwich Museums. ref. PAF3875.

unscathed, for the national hero could not be so condemned. In 1807 Gillray published *A New Edition, Considerably Enlarged, of Attitudes Faithfully Copied from Nature* in a print series parodying Rehberg's images of Emma's Attitudes (*Figure 30.4*). Profit apart, what was gained by *A New Edition, Considerably Enlarged* is hard to discern. Emma was no longer welcome in aristocratic homes and eked out a twilight life in poverty and ill-health, dying in 1815 in Calais, where she was buried.

Although the satirists' prints were biting, those who saw them were but a small proportion of those reading newspapers, which were chiefly available to urban audiences. The cost of print purchase was far greater and, while the general public might gawp at the displays in print sellers shop windows, they were not paintings to be framed and displayed on sitting-room walls (*Figure 29.1*). In terms of Greek vases, their close association with Sir William and Emma in particular, and the manner in which they were depicted, would encourage a view amongst those who saw the prints that the couple were, in some way, morally tarnished.

Collectively, Hamilton's herculean work in propagating antiquities to the public were brought into disrepute. In some aristocratic circles, Greek vases remained a symbol of decadence. A poignant example was the later history of the Hamilton's second vase collection, which he sold to Thomas Hope. In 1801 his son rented the family home at Deepdene, together with Hope's vase collection, to the Dowager Duchess of Marlborough, a woman who despised ancient art and refused access to Hope's vases for academics and the public alike. She had the vases moved to the icehouse, where the vase imagery would at least keep cool.[828]

[828] Nicole Budrovich, '100 Years Later: The Hope Collection from London to Los Angeles', *The Iris, Behind the scenes at the Getty* (July 25, 2017) https://blogs.getty.edu/iris/100-years-later-the-hope-collection-from-london-to-los-angeles/ (Accessed 24 07 2019).

It is difficult to know how damaging to the Hamiltons' reputation the attack of the satirists was in reality. Sir William's contribution to the spread of classical imagery in a modified form has been shown to be profound. Even so, the populace at large would be unaware of the process of transmission from antiquity to the classicising genteel imagery on the ceramics now increasingly available to the middling population. Yet the scandal of Emma and Nelson was public property. In aristocratic circles those who had witnessed the flamboyance of the lovers were, at the least, uneasy about the relationship, and at worst appalled. Seemingly, within his circle of friends, there was a degree of sympathy for the old, and now sick, redundant Envoy. It has been mentioned that Hamilton continued attending his learned societies and in 1800 chaired a Royal Society meeting and was also a Privy Councillor and Trustee of the British Museum. The reality was that a man who brought much understanding of natural philosophy, antiquity and beauty to Britain ended his days under a cloud of suspicion and mockery. The importance of Hamilton's work became so tarnished by his obsession with Emma and the international interest in her rise and fall, that the underlying, extraordinary work of the Envoy was obliterated until he was rehabilitated in the second half of the twentieth century.

Losing Friends in High Places: Hamilton's last Years in Naples

For much of his 36 years in Naples, Hamilton was a respected diplomat engaged usefully enough in a relatively obscure post. It was 'vases and volcanoes' for which he was famed, not the brilliance of his diplomacy. On his arrival in Naples, his commission had been to supply information to the British government relating to land use and the economy of the Kingdom.[829] The nearest he came to a response

[829] National Archive, State Papers. 93. 21. 22.

was not a communique to the Foreign Department in London, but his Fifth Letter to the Royal Society, which contained details of land use in the Kingdom.[830] A primary duty of envoys was to send to the Foreign Department dispatches of notable events in their fiefdom. Hamilton sent his, on average, every ten days. The accounts from most envoys were formal and short, yet Hamilton's were often far longer. They contained information about the Neapolitan Court, difficulties into which visitors placed themselves and his problems with Consul Jamineau, amongst other mundane activities. Occasionally, he found nothing diplomatic on which to comment, so his letters contained material, largely irrelevant to diplomacy, concerning archaeology, geology, natural philosophy and unrest amongst the *lazzaroni.* The style of his dispatches was similar to those he sent to the Royal Society and, as such, far less turgid than those of other envoys. As in all his writings, he presented himself in the best possible light.[831] Previously he had tried to gain promotion, either as ambassador to Spain or later Russia, but failed. In 1798 he wrote to the Foreign Department that:

> Without vanity I may say that my constant attendance upon his Sicilian Majesty for more than thirty years has greatly contributed to the evident partiality His Majesty shews [sic] to the English in preference to other nations . . .The Queen of Naples has often said to me C'est vous qui a de 'Bourbonise' Le Roi et notre cour et vous ete ici en effet le seul Ministre de Famile.[832]

Prior to the French Revolution, the years rolled by comfortably enough for Hamilton. Constantine quotes a letter from Hamilton to Viscount Weymouth which indicated that Hamilton's dominant interests were other than diplomacy. He observed

[830] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei,* Vol. I, p. 53 ff.
[831] This paragraph is based on reading a great many of Hamilton's dispatches, housed in the National Archive at Kew.
[832] National Archive, *Hamilton's Dispatches*, 17.4.1797. A paraphrase of the words in French might read 'You have some Bourbon in you and are the Minister to our family'.

that 'The very long stay I have made in the Country & my love for Antiquities & natural history have acquired me the character of the best Cicerone of Naples and its Environs, which has procured me a great deal of honour.'[833] Once Napoleonic aggrandisement was felt in Rome, the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily ceased to be a European backwater, useful to the British simply as a provisioning post for the navy, and became an important nexus of military operations. Gibraltar was not yet a British colony, increasing Naples' importance as a staging-post for the British fleet, especially after the French seized Malta.[834]

Hamilton's previous mediocre diplomatic performance at Naples was to be sorely challenged when Napoleonic France determined to invade Italy.[835] It was clear that the bonds between Sir William, Lady Hamilton and the Neapolitan royal family were strong. The relationship between Emma and Queen Carolina has not been sufficiently recognised by scholars. Their friendship, especially after Emma's marriage, was profound. Following leave in Britain, on their way back to Naples Emma and Sir William in Paris where they visited Marie-Antoinette, who was now in reduced and dangerous circumstances. At the conclusion of the meeting, Emma took back to Naples the last letter the doomed Queen wrote to her sister, Queen Maria Carolina. When news of Marie Antoinette's execution reached Naples, Carolina was prostrate with grief. Henceforth, Neapolitan policy towards France was summed up in Carolina's words: *'Je pour suivrai ma vengeance jusqu'au tombeau*' (I will follow my revenge to the grave).[836] This desire for vengeance will be shown as an important ingredient in Neapolitan policy towards the Napoleonic invasion of Italy supported by

[833] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 83.
[834] Davis and Capuano, *The Hamilton Letters*, p. 18
[835] Hamilton had previously applied for promotion as Ambassador to St Petersburg and later Spain. That he was passed over indicated that his diplomatic skills were not highly regarded in London.
[836] Quoted in Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 192.

Sir William and Emma. The interactions are complex, but reference to Network Diagram 9 (below) clarify them somewhat.

(Numbers refer to Network diagram 7, following)

1. & 2. Turks, Russians and Austrians seek an alliance with Britain against the French. Hamilton instructed to convince Naples to the alliance by any diplomatic means.

3. British admiralty concerned at Lord Nelson's erratic behaviour and his infatuation with Emma Hamilton.

4. Admiral Lord Keith, Nelson's superior, asserts his rank over Nelson, eventually recalling him from Naples.

5. Lord Nelson besotted with Emma Hamilton.

6. Captain Foote, together with Hamilton and Cardinal Ruffo, sign an armistice with Colonel Méjan, abrogated by Nelson as soon as he arrived in Naples.

7. General MacDonald, Head of the Republic of Rome defeated Ferdinand's army.

8. General Championnet, Leader of the French forced attacking Naples and establishing the Republic of Naples. General Championnet attempted to establish a Republic of Naples

9. Colonel Méjan left in charge of 800 French Forces in Naples, and the Jacobin Republic of Naples.

10 Cardinal Ruffo successfully led a reactionary counter-insurgency against the French occupation of Naples.

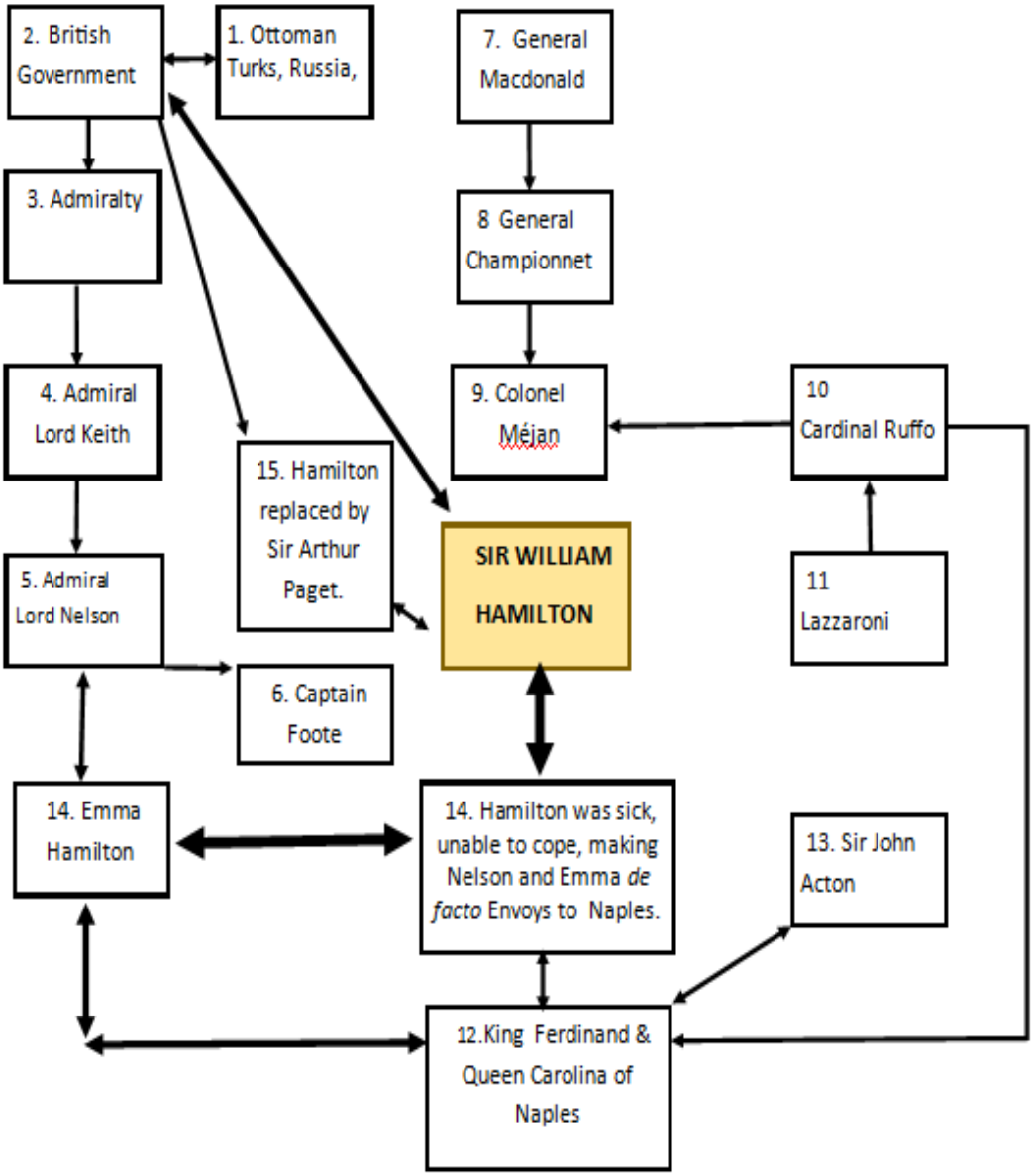
11. Lazzaroni. The mass of the Neapolitan population gave their support to Cardinal Ruffo.

12. Queen Carolina and King Ferdinand linked closely with Nelson, Emma and Hamilton in opposing the French.

13. Sir John Acton, principal advisor to the Royal Family had urged strict neutrality for the Kingdom but failed to convince them.

14. Sir William Hamilton, a sick and incompetent Envoy.

ND7 **NETWORKS OF ACTORS IN THE NEAPOLITAN REVOLUTIONS 1798-1799**



The Envoy demonstrated his innate conservatism by his whole-hearted support for the Neapolitan Royal Family in those crisis years. His contempt for the French was demonstrated rather pettily by using a lower-case 'f' whenever the words

'France' or 'French' were used in diplomatic correspondence. Neapolitan domestic and foreign affairs became both tumultuous and confused as the decade progressed.[837] Three themes can be observed in Hamilton's approach: close alignment with the Royal Family, hatred of the French, and fear of a possible Jacobin insurgency within the Kingdom. He was instructed from London to persuade the Kingdom to make a treaty with the Ottoman Turks and Britain against the French. Furthermore, he kept private his knowledge that the British would make no financial commitment to the campaign. It is important to note the role of Queen Maria Carolina during this period. A condition of her marriage to Ferdinand was that she should have a seat on the Council of State. Maria Carolina used it effectively, gaining a leading role within it. Why this was so is made clear in a letter to her brother, Grand Duke Peter Leopold, as early as 1779:

> I wish to God that my husband was diligent, I would have preferred him to do everything by himself. I should dedicate myself to my home, but his distracting life makes it impossible for him to do his duties. He has not been educated in this and never will be. So rather than see him killed by his ministers or by a bad person or led by his confessor I am forced to act so that he trusts and has confidence in me.[838]

It should be recalled that Naples was an impoverished Kingdom during Hamilton's tenure as Envoy. When war came their safest policy would have been a strict neutrality which, at this point, the French would have accepted. It was advocated by Sir John Acton (1736–1811), Maria Carolina's Prime Minister, but was rejected because of her animus to the French. However, Britain's interest was to engage as many French in the Mediterranean as possible, so reducing Napoleon's ability to deploy forces to attack the British mainland. A paper alliance was formed between

[837] Davis and Capuano, *The Hamilton Letters*, pp. 1-32.
[838] Cinzia Recca, 'Maria Carolina and Marie Antoinette: Sisters and Queens in the Mirror of Jacobin Public Opinion', *Royal Studies Journal*, 2014, p. 18.

Russians, the Turks, Austrian Hapsburgs and the British to attack the newly formed Republic of Rome through the agency of a Neapolitan army.[839]

A multi-national army of some 30,000 men was gathered, approved by Nelson as *La plus belle armée d'Europe.*[840] General Mack, its supreme commander, boasted that 'A finer army was never seen.' In reality it suffered an ignominious defeat in Rome and was pursued back to Naples, where the Republic of Naples was briefly created by the French.[841] Some eight hundred and fifty French soldiers supported a Jacobin uprising in Naples, followed by a vicious and largely successful Catholic counter-revolution led by Cardinal Ruffo (1744–1827), which was supported by the *lazzaroni*. The French were blockaded into the forts they held around Naples while an armistice was granted by Ruffo and counter-signed by the senior British naval officer in Naples, Captain Edward Foote (1767–1833). The arrangement was that the French could embark on their ships and return to Toulon. The next day Nelson returned to Naples with a fleet capable of destroying the embarked French and immediately countermanded Captain Foote's armistice. Nelson wrote to his commanding officer that 'I saw a flag of truce flying on His Majesty's ship, the Seahorse, [Captain Foote's ship] I instantly gave the signal to annul the truce being determined never to give my approbation to terms with rebels.'[842]

The French, already embarked, would be no match for Nelson's guns and were disembarked, disarmed and returned to the forts as prisoners. To this day there is no resolution to the issue of whether Hamilton was in league with Nelson when he countermanded the armistice in a peremptory and dishonourable fashion. The

[839] For further detail see Davies and Capuano, *The Hamilton Letters*, pp. 22–28.
[840] Ibid. p. 21.
[841] National Archive, Hamilton's Dispatches, 19.11.1798.
[842] Nelson to Lord Keith. 27.06 1799. Quoted in Davies and Capuano, *The Hamilton Letters*, p. 181.

subsequent policy of the Neapolitan government was harsh and reactionary, resulting in thousands of executions. Also noticeable was the Royal Family's refusal to use their own copious funds to support a desperate and starving *lazzaroni*.

In his final and humiliating years as Envoy, Hamilton aligned himself with, and was overshadowed by, Nelson, Emma, King Ferdinand and the all-important Queen Maria Carolina. Furthermore he was too weak, both physically and mentally, to take decisive action against the unseemly public behaviour of Emma and Nelson.[843] On 1st August 1798, a fete in Palermo included effigies of Hamilton, Nelson and Emma which prominently included the motto of the Order of The Bath, *Tria junca in Uno*, represented on all three, perhaps intended as a pun on their close relationship. By so pointedly aligning himself with Nelson and publicly offering Emma equal status, Hamilton was diminishing the role of his knighthood and his role as British Envoy, responsible only to the Foreign Department in London. Nelson was already viewed by the Admiralty as insubordinate and requiring firm treatment by his superiors. Meanwhile Hamilton's health declined and Emma became fatter, while Nelson's devotion to her continued unabated. Lady Elgin, visiting them in Palermo, made a telling comment on Emma: 'She is a Wapper! And I think her manner very vulgar.'[844]

The reality was that in the final two years of his Neapolitan tenure, Hamilton became ineffective while, extraordinarily, the evidence points to Emma and later Nelson as the effective diplomats. Emma's role had greatly increased as Hamilton's health declined. She acted both as his secretary and as a 'double agent', advising the Queen on British intentions and passing information to Hamilton about matters she discovered from the Queen.[845] Whereas Emma before her marriage yearned to be

[843] Constantine *Fields of Fire*, p. 229.
[844] Lady Elgin is quoted describing Emma in Palermo in Ibid., p. 242.
[845] See Fothergill, *Sir William Hamilton*, pp. 280–281.

formally presented to her, during her husband's bouts of sickness it was Emma who acted as 'Pro-Envoy', introducing important dignitaries to Carolina. During Ferdinand's and Carolina's removal to Palermo, Emma went as far as to describe herself as Carolina's 'Deputy'.[846] Hamilton's communiqués, although guarded, acknowledged his wife's role. He went so far as to enclose some of Maria Carolina's letters to the British authorities. Hamilton wrote that, 'The Queen of Naples charged Emma] with important commissions at Naples and kept up a daily communication with Her Majesty. . . I have found that her letters to Lady Hamilton throw much light on the present situation in Naples.'[847]

Few would have believed that a miner's daughter from the Wirral and a London prostitute would, *de facto*, run the British Embassy in Naples. It also stresses the crass nature of Cruikshanks' *A Mansion House Treat– or Smoking Attitudes* (*Figure 30.3*). It is as if Sir William's engagement with antiquity over a thirty-four-year period was worthless and indeed dangerous. As early as 1795 Hamilton requested retirement, 'Should this wretched war ever come to an end'. In a letter to Lord Grenville he wrote 'I feel that age and infirmity begin to render me incapable of serving his Majesty'. [848] Again in 1797 he applied for leave, including in his letter the phrase 'I begin to find repose necessary.'[849] Such correspondence must have alerted the Foreign Department to ponder Hamilton's future. The British Foreign Department's doubts would have been confirmed as the preposterous relationship between Nelson, Emma and Hamilton became ever more public, with their nation's representative, the British Envoy, taking no steps to remedy the situation. Captain

[846] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, pp. 236–237.
[847] National Archive, Hamilton's Dispatches, 14.7.1799. Quoted in Davis and Capuano, *The Hamilton Letters*, p. 45
[848] Quoted in Constantine *Fields of Fire*, p. 206.
[849] BM. Add. MS 34048, F. 82v.

Foote summed up his superior's obsession well, not hiding his distaste with Nelson's romance:

> Be assured that the least that is said about Lord Nelson's conduct in the Bay of Naples the better, for however great and able his Lordship, at this time he was absolutely infatuated.[850]

No help was given by the British Government to assist Hamilton's final homeward journey to London. It appeared that the circuitous route taken through Austria was planned for Emma and Nelson to enjoy rapturous receptions as they made an almost royal progress. The humiliations the lovers inflicted on Sir William were shocking. Constantine recorded aspects of their journey:

> All the towns [in Austria] were celebrating the second anniversary of the Battle of the Nile. Emma and Nelson walked arm in arm, her black maid Fatima, Nelson's gift from Egypt, following behind. [851]

Sir William was not present. The return of Sir William and Lady Hamilton was recorded in the *Observer* of London on Sunday, 16 February, 1800: 'Sir William Hamilton, after a zealous service of unprecedented continuance to the Court of Naples is about to experience the comforts attached to competence in this Land of Liberty'. It is followed by what seems to be a sideswipe at Emma. Now no longer an intimate of Queen Maria-Carolina of Naples, her influence had diminished. The 'diplomatic lady' cited below can only be Emma. The affair with Nelson was alluded to and was a prescient prophecy for Emma's future depressing life:

> A Certain diplomatic Lady is said to have recently, in a contest not exactly feminine, given proof of something more than a masculine misunderstanding, in consequence of which, having forfeited the influence of the estimation she possessed, she is about to return to London. [852]

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[850] Quoted in Davis and Capuano, *The Hamilton Letters*, p. 7.
[851] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 249.
[852] *Observer*, Sunday, February 16, 1800.

This chapter has discussed the various social and moral changes during the 36 years in which Hamilton was Envoy in Naples. For the most part, his life was insulated from changes outside the aristocratic class which surrounded him. In Naples, he lived a luxurious lifestyle in the company of his own social equals, supplemented by artists, natural philosophers and Grand Tourists. His contact with Britain was through extensive private and diplomatic correspondence, together with contacts made in the Republic of Letters. While on furlough he dealt with his Welsh estates, attended important functions and met with members of the learned societies of London. He had no dealings with the general public, making it unsurprising that the social and moral changes in British society passed him by. This unawareness opened him to criticism in three aspects of his life. The public response to his vase collections was not unfavourable, but the graphic nature of their publication became a weapon for those with an axe to grind in favour of the 'new morality'. It was clearly shown when Thomas Kirk's modified illustrations from *AEGR* and *CEAV* were published and widely applauded. Likewise, it was inevitable that Payne Knight's publication of Priapus, when Hamilton's letter was published on its title page, would be negatively received by those outside a narrow scholarly circle. Yet it was Emma who was the ultimate cause of his disgrace. The wide-spread craze for copying her fashions, Attitudes and portraits propelled her into the public gaze, so making her a model for the fashionistas, but one of disapprobation for the conservative minded. Sir William's encouragement of the use of vases in her Attitudes ensured that ancient vessels, with their explicit imagery, would weld painted vases, Hamilton and Emma together in the public mind.

Regarding diplomacy, Hamilton's effectiveness can be divided into the period before and after the French Revolution. Hospitality to visitors, general amiability and maintaining excellent relationships with the Neapolitan Royal Family were the

hallmarks to his diplomatic role pre 1792, but muddle and incompetence mired his diplomacy as the French advanced into Italy. Davis and Capuano are severe in their criticism.[853] They perceive him as an example of the 'Peter Principle', based on the belief that 'in a hierarchy every employee tends to rise to the level of his incompetence'.[854] Even while they portray him as showing little interest or ability in diplomacy, they acknowledge his competence in antiquities and natural philosophy. It was the satirists who persisted in forcefully pillorying Hamilton in his later years as weak through age, sickness and moral corruption. Their portrayal was inaccurate. Until his death, Hamilton continued as a respected member of the learned societies and furthermore, the University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Civil Law *honoris causa* in 1802.

The postscript to this chapter is that the overall judgement of Hamilton's diplomatic skills must be negative. London did little to soften the blow when he was effectively sacked. Even the letter advising him of his dismissal has weasel words within it. Extracts from the Minister's final letter read:

> I should but ill satisfy my own feelings and what is due to exertions so jealously employed and so long which I entertain in common with the rest of His Majesties servants of your zeal and assiduity in in the performance of your duties.
> Then came the sting the tail.
>
> His Majesty has been pleased to appoint Hon. Arthur Paget with whom I have to request that you will communicate fully on the present internal situation of the Country.[855]

Hamilton's response was shock and disbelief, indicating how far he was from comprehending his low esteem in London. Yet there was another positive side to his endeavours. Wilhelm Tischbein knew Hamilton well and was on excellent terms with

[853] Davis and Capuano, *The Hamilton Letters*, p. 228.
[854] Lawrence Peter and Raymond Hull, *The Peter Principle* (Harper Business, London, 1969), pp. 9–16.
[855] Davis and Capuano, *The Hamilton Letters*, p. 219, Dispatch 52, Dec. 1799.

him, indicated by his editorship of *CEAV.* His testimony to Hamilton's worth flatly contradicts that of the Foreign Department in London:

> In the arts we owe Hamilton a great deal and as a person he is one in a million . . . We owe it to him that the vases were recognised as works of art . . . He is the only one to have seen their true worth and spirit. Hamilton spent thirty thousand talers on the vases and other people have pleasure from them. Is that not worthy of praise and gratitude? Believe me, my dear friend, I know the art workd [sic] pretty well by now and there are few real connoisseurs in it. Hamilton is one of them and when we lose him we will lose a great deal. [856]

Superficially the evidence points to Emma, often unknowingly, but sometimes with cruel deliberation, being the major cause of Sir William's fall. Yet there are other factors to consider. Two hundred and fifty years have elapsed since he first met Emma, 'The teamaker from Paddington' as he called her. His attraction to her was so strong that he gave in to Charles Greville, his nephew, who put pressure on his uncle to traffic Emma to him. Earlier in the thesis it was shown that Hamilton became besotted with her. Considering Emma's previous life, passed from man to man, it is unsurprising that she took advantage of the situations in which she found herself. Hamilton certainly used her to further his reputation within his circle, by directing her Attitudes and repeatedly using her both as model and mistress. However, in the 1790s the wheel turned and increasingly Emma used Hamilton to her advantage. Whether it was her conscious intension or not, many times during her relationship with Nelson, Sir William was humiliated by her. Such was his dependence on her that he was unable to end the relationship, succumbing to more ridicule when Emma openly flaunted her passion for Nelson, acting as mistress of his house at Merton. Yet she retained some kind of affection for William Hamilton. He died in 1803 in Emma's arms, with Nelson holding his hand. It is the stuff of

[856] Fredrich Von Alten, (Ed)., *Aus Tischbeins Leben und Briefwechsel* (Leipzig, 1872), pp. 77-78. Quoted in Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p 265. The letter was written in 1801.

melodrama. Nevertheless, had Hamilton never met Emma, the story of his later life would surely have been very different.

Conclusion

The thesis has explored aspects of Hamilton's life which permit a greater understanding of this enigmatic statesman within the context of the eighteenth century. At one level he typified the aristocratic Englishman of his age, regarding only those with rank and birth as his social equals. It was a trait demonstrated forcibly by his fear of revolutionary France spreading radical notions of equality in the last decade of the eighteenth century.[857] Even so, Hamilton is shown as respecting the talents of those below his own social status. Notwithstanding, he demonstrated little understanding of the rapid societal changes in Britain. The network analysis of Morrison's autographed letters, which follow this conclusion, demonstrates that the Envoy remained closely tied to his aristocratic social network.

In matters of connoisseurship, Hamilton was confident and was recognised as an expert even before arriving in Naples.[858] Sir Joshua Reynolds and Horace Walpole have been noted as admiring his talent in the field. Walpole's comment that '[Hamilton] will ruin himself in virtu land' pointed to his talent in this field, while Sir Joshua Reynolds requested that Hamilton obtain fine art pictures for him. The Envoy's reconstruction of the Warwick Vase, together with his acquisition of the Portland Vase, were further proof of his ability to judge the worth of fine art and antiquities.

[857] For instance, in 1792 Tom Paine's *Rights of Man* had been translated into Welsh.
[858] Alfred Morrison's *Collection of Autographed Letters and Historical Documents* (1894) includes numerous references to dignitaries trusting to his judgement as a connoisseur. They include Sir Joshua Reynolds (Letter 17), while Letter 58 demonstrates Hamilton's judgement in the field.

Another element evident in Hamilton's personality was his self-containment. As a young man he sold his much treasured first fine art collection for fear of financial embarrassment. After his marriage to Catherine Barlow her income gave the couple financial stability. It was of great satisfaction to him as he could 'Live decently without being obliged to anyone'[859] The thought of financial security was important to him, as he wrote: 'I cannot tell you. . . how often such a thought has comforted me, when I had reason to be out of humour with the great world.' [860] He showed an emotional attachment to the vases he collected, even though he realised that someday they must be sold. As was demonstrated in Chapter Six, Tischbein noted how intensely Hamilton engaged with vase imagery. Concurrently Hamilton's antiquities collections were also financial collateral, to be sold when occasion demanded. The fate of the first collection satisfied him. Even having sold it to the British Museum, in one sense it never left him, displayed as it was under his portrait in the Hamilton Gallery of the British Museum.

It is impossible to make any definitive statement about his personal relationships. Within his circle of aristocratic friends, he clearly enjoyed bonhomie. Their correspondence with him was couched in terms of friendship, as the analysis of Morrison's *Autographed Letters* shows clearly. Even after his ignominious return from Naples his circle of friends mostly supported him.[861] They did not include King George III, of whom Hamilton wrote bitterly when negotiating his expenses and pension with the Foreign Department of the British Government. He wrote that 'I cannot think that the King has forgot that my Mother reared us and the same nurse suckled us.'[862] In terms of those beneath his social circle, Hamilton offered respect

[859] Morrison, Letter 95, Hamilton to Greville, Naples 09 12 1780.
[860] Ibid
[861] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, pp. 265–268.
[862] Ibid., p.282.

but not social equality to manufacturers such as Josiah Wedgwood. As for the generality of people, with a very few exceptions, they were disregarded, apart from the mundane tasks they performed for him. At a time when Naples was engulphed with cinders from a violent eruption of Vesuvius, Hamilton's only comment on its effects on the *lazzaroni* was that 'In the midst of these horrors the Mob [grew] tumultuous and impatient.'[863]

There were three people to whom Sir William demonstrated affection, namely his first wife, Catherine Barlow, His nephew Charles Greville and Emma Hamilton. Catherine Hamilton showed great concern for his day-to-day welfare. It has been shown that she fretted over what she perceived as his 'dissipated life'. Catherine was a devout Evangelical woman with great musical talent, who controlled the Palazzo Sessa's busy social life in an exemplary manner. Hamilton was grief stricken after her death, eventually honouring her wish that he be buried next to her on their estate at Slebech. Hamilton's comment was that when he and Emma returned to England 'Dead or alive I shall come home, for my first wife's particular desire that I am to lye beside her in Slebech Church.'[864] It demonstrates that Hamilton's relationship with Emma was of a different order from that with Catherine. Charles Greville and Sir William worked closely together on Hamilton's financial affairs and Hamilton's frequent letters to him often began with the affectionate salutation 'My dear Charles'. Greville knew that he was the main beneficiary in Hamilton's will and as such it behoved him to remain on very good terms with his uncle. Even so, perhaps unknowingly, he sowed the seeds of Hamilton's disgrace when he trafficked Emma to his uncle at a time when, after Catherine's death, he was vulnerable. Greville expected that she would become his uncle's mistress and must have been deeply

[863] Hamilton, *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol. I, p. 28.
[864] British Library, Add. Mass. 34048, ff. 94-95.

concerned that an heir would rob him of his inheritance after Hamilton and Emma wed. What remains inexplicable is her influence over the Envoy, who danced to her every tune. Some sympathy towards Emma is necessary for her troubled past must have damaged her in ways that, from a distance of more than two centuries, cannot now be understood. Towards the end of the 1790s there was no heir and Emma was aware that Greville would inherit most of Hamilton's assets, which, after his debts were settled, were not substantial. Perhaps Emma viewed Nelson as her next protector. After Catherine's death there were few people on whom Hamilton might totally depend. In the last years of his life he became detached. A late letter to Emma contained this conclusion: 'I care not a fig for the great world.'[865] This statement was backed by his burial alongside Catherine, in her family vault in Slebech, rather than any grand resting place in London.

Networking was a crucial ingredient within Hamilton's life. The thesis has shown how, repeatedly, he ensured that his activities were noted in Britain. In part, it was achieved by personal networking, such as the daily hospitality offered to so many in the Palazzo Sessa, the recipients of which passed on their positive opinion of the Envoy to others whom they would meet on return to Britain. More formally, his publications spread news of his research into natural philosophy to a European-wide audience. Once his collections of antiquities were displayed in the British Museum a wider public would learn of his activities in Naples. The range of correspondence offered in Morrison's *The Hamilton and Nelson Letters* (following this conclusion) demonstrates the breadth of issues on which he corresponded. Only when these are measured against the diplomatic communiqués of 45 years in Naples is the wide scope of his networks fully comprehensible.

[865] Morison, Alfred, (1893) Letter 195, Earl of Pembroke to Hamilton, Manchester, 16 10 1791

The thesis demonstrates how, throughout his career, Hamilton offered new insights into natural philosophy, both through his writing and the physical specimens he sent to institutions such as the British Museum and the Royal Society. Equally, through public viewing of his antiquities collections he offered the Pyrrhonists insights into an ancient culture, enhanced by painted vases from antiquity. They heightened understanding when appreciated alongside the classical literature so loved by the educated of the period. The thesis has furthered understanding of how Hamilton is different from others of his age, by the wide range of knowledge he explored and successfully developed. He was not content with a superficial study of his many interests but explored them rigorously and published his findings. Frequently he found links between natural philosophy, the nature of time from the excavations of the Buried Cities until his own age. In the twenty-first century his activities and writings might be termed as 'interdisciplinary', although such a term implies separate areas for study in a manner foreign to Hamilton's research.

Until the last years of his life Hamilton was constantly busy. He said of his career that 'I have passed the last 40 years of my life in the hurry and bustle that must necessarily be attendant on public character.'[866] The statement was no exaggeration. Daily he would conduct the diplomatic affairs of his embassy interspersed with geological research and collecting of antiquities, while interacting with the leading experts of their time. He was also beholden to King Ferdinand, with whom he spent long periods hunting – not always to the Envoy's pleasure.

The importance of his scholarly activities requires evaluation. His work in relation to natural philosophy has been under researched and his achievements in the field have not been sufficiently recognised. The thesis has explored this further. Hamilton

[866] Ibid., Letter 197.

revolutionised the understanding of volcanoes and came close to realising that geological time was infinite. His scientific methodology was far in advance of contemporaries. No previous geological survey of the Neapolitan caldera had been undertaken, nor had anyone made an isoseismic assessment of it. Likewise, the longitudinal study of seismic phenomena over a thirty-year period was unique. James Hutton, the Scottish geologist who finally articulated that geological processes were infinite, gave Hamilton no credit, even though he had read *Campi Phegraei* and had conversations with the Envoy.

Hamilton is best remembered for his vase and antiquities collections and their publication. My analysis of the primary source material and many learned articles dedicated to the subject has reached a surprising conclusion. There has been limited recognition that Hamilton's role was slender in relation to *AEGR*, and while he claimed the authorship of *CEAV* a great deal of the work in its production was dependent on Tischbein and not Hamilton himself. Unlike *AEGR*, *CEAV* was indeed a catalogue raisonné, yet Hamilton's description of the vases was not his alone, but a joint endeavour with the scholar and diplomat Count Italinsky. Notwithstanding, Sir William deserves great credit for insisting that most of the ancient vases in his collections were Greek and not Etruscan in origin. There is a sharp contrast between Hamilton's limited personal contribution to the publication of his vase collections and the undoubted contribution he made personally to a greater understanding of the volcanology and seismology of the Neapolitan caldera.

The thesis has shown that Hamilton's motives for his extravagant collections were present pleasure and future financial reward. For both collections he derived personal prestige – from the gallery dedicated to him in the British Museum and his second collection displayed in purpose-built surroundings in Thomas Hope's London home, where many were frequently allowed to view them. What can be deduced

two centuries later is that the cost of Hamilton's collecting and the income from their sale was largely balanced.

Gifts, publications and diplomatic and private correspondence, all of which enhanced Hamilton's reputation continued throughout his adult life. Yet Chapter Six demonstrated how his last years in London were dogged by financial problems and scandal. It would be mistaken to assume that Hamilton became ostracised by all after his return to London. He remained active within the learned societies and continued to function as a Privy Councillor and trustee of the British Museum.

That there was public outrage caused by his relationship with both Emma and Admiral Nelson is beyond dispute. As was demonstrated in Chapter Six, it is unknowable as to why Hamilton married Emma. The reality was that he was so involved with Emma that he failed to understand the diplomatic implications of his much-publicised acceptance of the relationship between himself, Emma and Nelson. It required his dismissal. Hamilton did not comprehend the *coup de grâ*ce when the Prime Minster, William Pitt the Younger, summarily dismissed him in 1799. Sir William's feelings were further hurt with the demand that he should afford his successor, the Honourable Arthur Paget, every assistance, an invitation Hamilton declined. The thesis has demonstrated repeatedly that Hamilton sought honour, respect and recognition. What he failed to perceive was that his domestic relationship with Emma and Nelson caused widespread hostility towards him in Britain, heightened by the threat of French aggression to Britain itself.

Chapter 12 of David Constantine's *Fields of Fire* is entitled 'Wreck and Disgrace', his assessment of Sir William's last years in Naples. At the time, the scandal buried Hamilton's many contributions to natural philosophy and the arts, which the thesis has emphasised. Wilhelm Tischbein knew Hamilton well and was on excellent terms with him, as indicated by his editorship of *CEAV*. The artist had lived alongside

Hamilton at the Palazzo Sessa, and so knew the Envoy intimately. His testimony to Hamilton's worth as a collector and antiquarian is in stark contrast to Hamilton's diplomatic performance, as his encomium, previously quoted, demonstrated.

No memorial to Hamilton will be found in high places. He rests peacefully in Slebech. Not even his alma mater, Westminster School, places him on its roll of honour. David Constantine recorded that in 1945 an army unit guarding German prisoners, led by Sgt. Bernard Allcock, was engaged in tidying up the ruins of the old church in Slebech, clearing earth and rubble from the nave. In the process they found it hollow:

> After talking a bit we [lifted] one of the slabs [and found] a crypt which looked very forbidding. . .With the aid of torches we saw seven coffins laying there and in the right hand corner an urn about two feet high. . .I would like to point out that the coffins and ornaments were not interfered with or violated in any way. The tomb was then resealed on V. E. day and the following inscription was carved in the cement
> '177 Field Ambulance R.A.M.C, V.E. Day, May 8th 1945. A penny was placed in the cement as a seal.'[867]

Two of the coffins are those of William and Catherine Hamilton, as they are recorded as being interred there. There is no record of the crypt having been opened since, leaving the intriguing prospect that the final vase from Sir William's collection remains in the crypt of an obscure ruined church in a remote Pembrokeshire village, with an unidentified vase by his side.

[867] Constantine, *Fields of Fire*, p. 288, taken from the Haverfordwest Public Library, Slebech file.

Appendix

THE COLLECTION

OF

AUTOGRAPH LETTERS

AND

HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

FORMED BY

ALFRED MORRISON

THE HAMILTON & NELSON PAPERS.

VOLUME I.

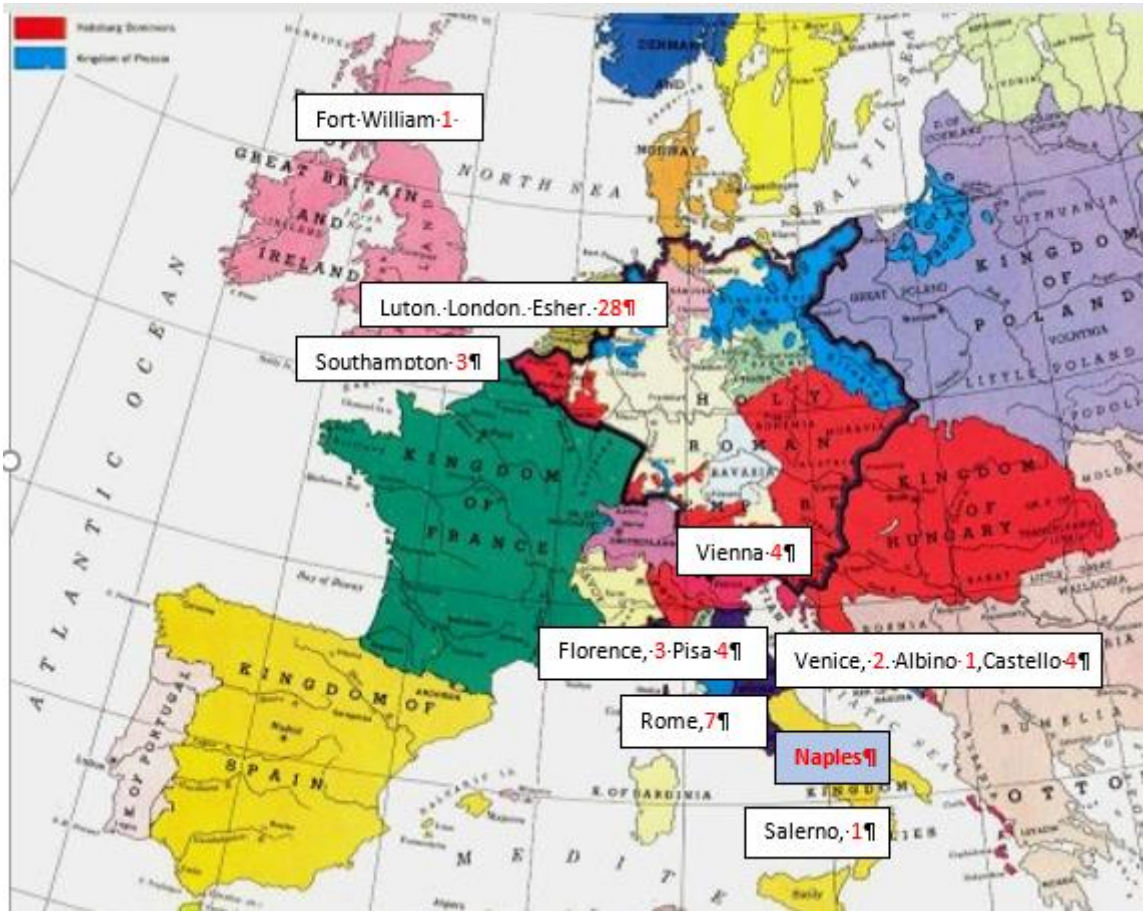
1756–1797.

PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.

1893.

Alfred Morrison (1821–1897) was educated at Edinburgh and Cambridge. He is best remembered today for his collections of autographed letters. Although it represents only a fragment of Hamilton's correspondence, its contents are sufficiently varied to allow a number of the networks he used to be explored. In this Appendix Letters 3-123 are used, written between the time of Hamilton's arrival in Naples and the death of his first wife, Catherine, in 1782

The Geographical Distribution of Hamilton's Letters, 1764-1782



<u>The social class of Hamilton's correspondents recorded in Morrison</u>

Sources of his Correspondence

The geographical distribution of Hamilton's correspondence demonstrates that the majority of the letters were either from London, or from the country estates of his aristocratic friends.

A second group of correspondents were those on the Grand Tour, frequently writing to the Envoy for help in various ways. In one case Lord Hamilton wrote to his relative William Hamilton seeking help (and financial assistance) to disentangle him from a love affair that had become a disaster (*Letters 64–69*). Four letters are from poor artists in Rome.

Numbers in red next to the place of origin indicate the number of letters Hamilton received from various places.

Following from the map showing the location of his correspondents, a similar pattern emerges. Hamilton's contacts are largely from aristocratic circles. Even so, members of the Republic of Letters, authors, antiquarians and artists are well represented. In Morrison's letters, Wedgwood is the manufacturer with whom Hamilton communicated. His banker, Thomas Coutts, features more prominently after Emma Hamilton's arrival in Naples.

Correspondent	**Number of Letters**
Titled Aristocrats	24
Minor Aristocrats	8
Diplomats	1
Authors, Antiquarians and Artists	9
Manufacturers	1
Bankers	1
Foreigners	4

Requests made to Hamilton by his correspondents

The number, in red, indicates the letter reference in Morrison's collection.

It is striking that the Envoy's contacts frequently used him as a means of obtaining items not available in Britain. More appropriate for his role as Envoy, there are requests for him to assist young Grand Tourists in Naples, as well as those seeking diplomatic and financial aid. The extensive correspondence between Hamilton and Charles Greville is discussed below.

Lord Montstuart
Desires Hamilton to find him a collection of shells 11.

Lord Pembroke
Requests the Envoy to purchase a gun for him 8. He reimburses the cost for a purchase Hamilton made on his behalf 33. He requests that Hamilton will purchase horses on his behalf 80. He asks Hamilton to take care of his son on the Grand Tour in Naples 89. He solicits a copy of Hamilton's letter on Isernia 103.

Lady Holland
Seeks the Envoy's help in acquiring tables made of Sicilian agate 11.

Horace Walpole
Copious thanks for three crates of antiquities Hamilton collected for him 12.

Lord Bruce
Requests three copies of *L'Antichita* 16.

Joshua Reynolds
Asks Hamilton to collect fine art pictures for him 17.

Lord Clive
Requests that Hamilton deliver a sword to a contact 55.

Duke of Hamilton
Requires Hamilton to pay £300 as a loan so as to extract him from a disastrous love affair 64.
He Seeks the Envoy's help in allowing him to hunt on King Ferdinand's land 69.

Lord Frederick Hervey
Asks Hamilton to forward a fine art picture he has purchased 82.

Warren Hastings

Seeks Hamilton's help in developing a mineral collection 91.

The thirty-seven letters between William Hamilton and Charles Greville, 1769-1783
Numbers in brackets refer to specific letters.

Greville was the second son of Francis Greville, First Earl of Warwick and his wife, Elizabeth, William Hamilton's sister. As a younger son, similar to Hamilton, he had no significant personal wealth and he spent his life on a fixed income of about £500 (£87,000). He led an active political life as Member of Parliament for Warwick and held some important posts in government. His interests lay in collecting fine art and minerals. A rapport with his uncle began when he visited him in Naples while on the Grand Tour in 1769. Greville began collecting minerals, using his uncle and his connections all over Europe to help him acquire obscure samples. Hamilton named him as his heir.

The letters differ markedly from Hamilton's other correspondences. He frequently writes to his nephew in an endearing fashion, referring to him as 'My dear Charles' (146). A further example is where he uses casual language in affectionate tones when describing a hot summer: 'Tho' my head is not in its best state owing to this confounded heat, I will not neglect answering your last of the 1st July' (37). Greville uses affectionate tones in his own letters: 'My love to Lady Hamilton' (59) and 'I must beg you to give my best souvenir to Lady Hamilton; I saw her friends in the Phillips and Kings Lately. Addio, believe me etc' (96). Frequently the letters simply convey family news and current events.

Both parties lived at the limits of their financial means and many letters share details about their respective plights (95). Their mutual desire to collect (and in Hamilton's case publish) proved a major cause of their financial instability. For

example, the publication of *Campi Phlegraei* cost £1300 (£200,000) while Hamilton's stipend as Envoy was £3,000 per annum (£460,000) (71). By 1740 Hamilton was concerned about his financial position. He was entirely open with Greville about his parlous state. Having purchased three fine paintings, he told Greville that 'If I do make the purchase I must draw upon you at once for the money, for I have worse than nothing in Ross's hands owing to the great arrears of the civil list' (40). Furthermore, he asked Greville to raise the matter in Parliament. His nephew was also in dire financial straits and his uncle offered him advice. That Greville 'Should not bare to be dunned' as Hamilton was in his youth was quoted in Chapter One (70). Yet in the same letter Hamilton's advice was to follow his own example and marry a rich woman. The affectionate tone is once more apparent: 'There is a fine girl [in Naples], Miss St George. Her father died yesterday and left her clear £6000 per annum. . .I wish you was [sic] here at her. Adieu my dear Charles. Ever yrs' (40). It is a theme that recurs: 'I think you might contrive to make yourself comfortable by marriage' (95). Greville never married, and little did Hamilton think at the time that his advice would lead to the liaison with Emma Hart.

In many ways Greville was a demanding nephew. In terms of fine art, the letters of Greville and Hamilton make many references to purchase and trading. One picture, Correggio's *Venus Disarming Cupid*, was a favourite which the Envoy tried repeatedly to sell (115). Hamilton's much vaunted connoisseurship was apparent but used most frequently to assay the worth of a picture in relation to its price. Many letters testify to this (39, 58, 62). At one point in the correspondence Greville accuses his uncle of losing interest in collecting, writing to him that 'You seem dead to that in which your eye & taste distinguish you eminently' (102, 105). Equally, Greville takes Hamilton to task over his love of hunting, forcefully pointing out that if he chose to chase paintings

rather than game his (Greville's) own fine art collection would be richer. In the same letter he terms his senior a Nimrod. Seemingly, Greville had no fear of Hamilton disinheriting him (102). The letters have many references to Hamilton's hunting prowess (86, 101). Perhaps a selfish streak may be discerned in Greville, for throughout the period covered by these letters Hamilton was generous to him, with Greville only sending trifles in return (14, 39, 56).

Hamilton's desire for recognition has been alluded to throughout the thesis. He relates with pride his entertaining distinguished European nobility. Charles Greville received a letter from his uncle enthusing over a visit to the Palazzo Sessa by the Emperor of Austria (18). The letter is dated April 1769, demonstrating Hamilton's positive reputation at this early stage in his diplomatic career. In 1782 he again boasts to Greville of a visit from the Grand Duke and Duchess of Russia: 'What with the carnival, chasse [sic] and attendance upon the Grand Duke and Duchess of Russia, who were pleased to desire me as their cicerone, I have not had a moment's rest this fortnight past' (115).

There are frequent mentions of his favoured status with King Ferdinand and Queen Maria Carolina (52). At times he was invited to stay with the Royals (52, 60, 71). Ferdinand and Queen Maria Carolina were crucial to him until Hamilton's recall in 1799. While Hamilton was delighted with these exalted connections, the same was untrue for the more mundane visitors. He was open with Greville about his disdain for them, terming them 'A hoard of English' or 'The flock of English most terrible' and 'Plagues' (52, 78). In public he kept his sangfroid, with the result that many of his guests returning home believed that the Envoy had been pleased to entertain them.

The letters demonstrate an insecure side to Hamilton's personality. His enthusiasm for diplomacy waned after unsuccessful applications for the posts of Ambassador to

Russia and later Spain (26, 52). As early as 1781 he debated whether to send the rest of his career in Naples (101). He eludes to a dislike for the vanities of public life (78) and when advising Greville to marry into money, he makes much of Catherine Hamilton's income, that would give them solitude and independence if required (40). There is scant mention of Catherine in his letters to Greville, apart from frequent references to her health. In 1782 he was aware that her health was in rapid decline (118). However, Morrison collected two poignant letters from her to Hamilton expressing her love and need for him, citing the emptiness in her life during his frequent absences (116, 120). Yet after the tumultuous Emma Hamilton years that were to follow, the Envoy determined that his resting place would be beside Catherine in Slebech.

Illustrations

***Figure 1*. Lord Fortrose Entertains, 1770**

An aristocrat's home in a Neapolitan palazzo.

Fabris sketches the scene, bottom left. The two keyboard players are Leopold and Wolfgang Mozart. Hamilton plays on his violin.

Artist: Peter Fabris. *Source*: Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

Figure 2. **Catherine and William Hamilton at Home in the Palazzo Sessa**

In this opulent setting, Hamilton gazes at his first wife, Catherine, recognised as a talented spinet performer.

Artist: David Allen (1770). *Source*: Wikipedia Commons.

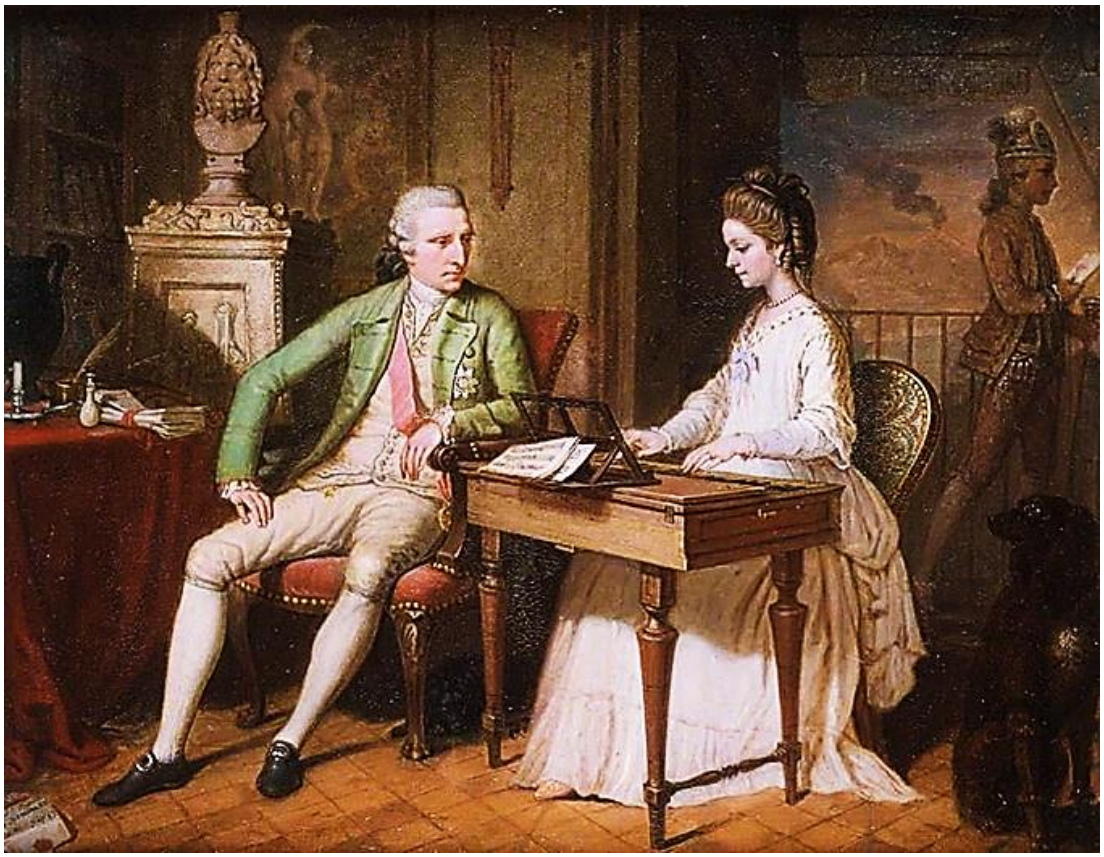


***Figure 3*. Sir William Hamilton in Full Diplomatic Regalia**

The image is of Sir William after he had become a Knight of the Bath in 1772. The insignia of the Order is prominent on his right shoulder

Artist: David Allen *Source*: National Gallery.

***Figure 4*. A Moment of the Sublime, 11th May 1771**

Hamilton escorts the Neapolitan Monarchy to view lava cascading into a gully while Fabris sketches the scene.

Campi Phlegraei, Volume II. Plate XXXVIII. *Source*: Claremont University, California.

References to Plate XXXVIII.

A Night view of a current of lava, that ran from Mount Veſuvius towards Reſina, the 11th of May 1771. When the Author had the honor of conducting THEIR SICILIAN MAJESTIES to ſee that curious phenomenon.

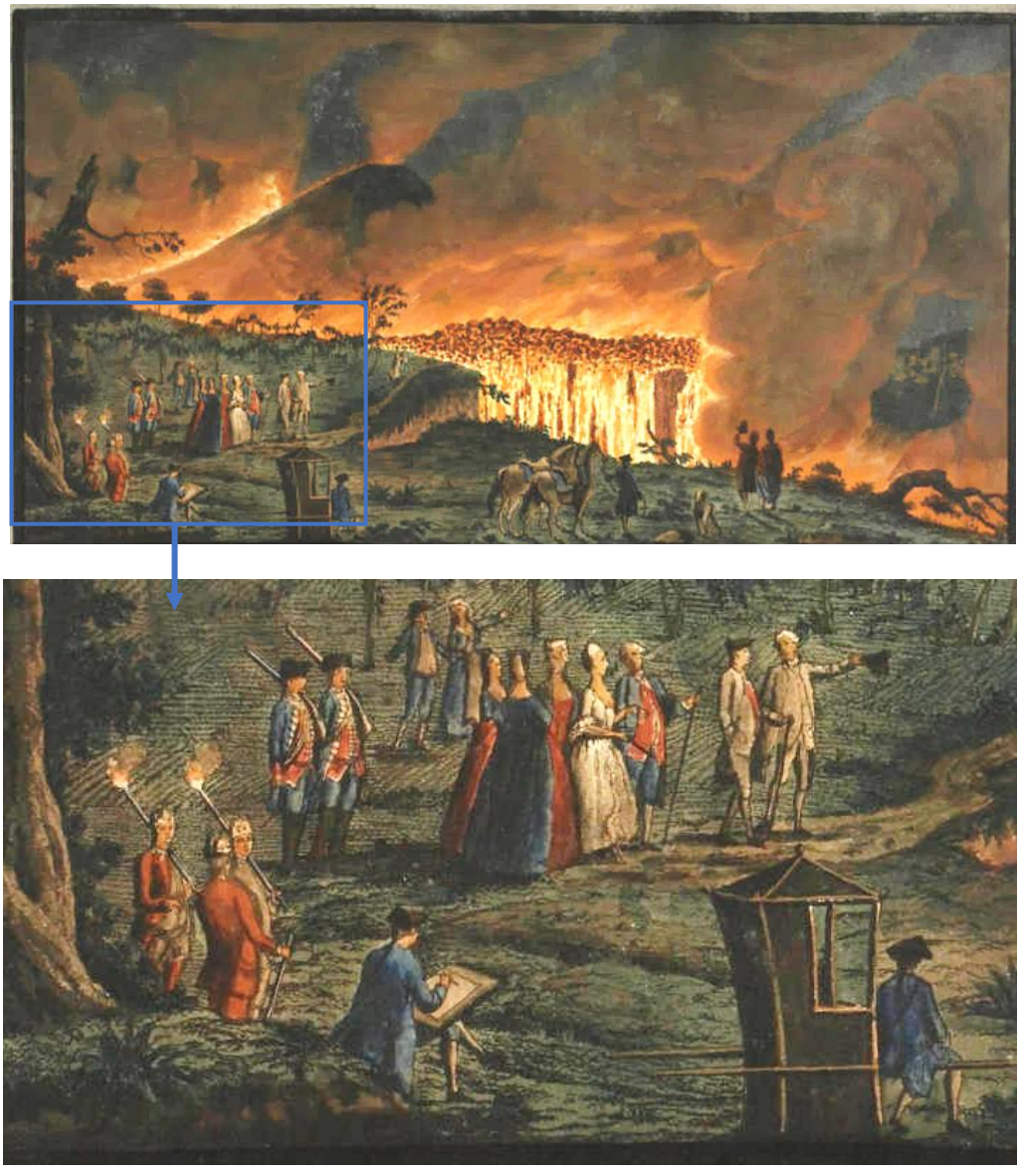


***Figure 5*. Dormant and active Volcanoes within the Neapolitan Caldera**

Source for Figures 5.1 & 5.2: Claremont University, California.

5.1. *Campi Phlegraei*, Vol II. Plate XVII

The image depicts a volcanic landscape from the mainland to outlying islands.

5.2. The Growth of the Cone of Vesuvius

Campi Phlegraei. Volume I. Plate II

From the enlarged image, note the stippled line indicating the measurements shown.

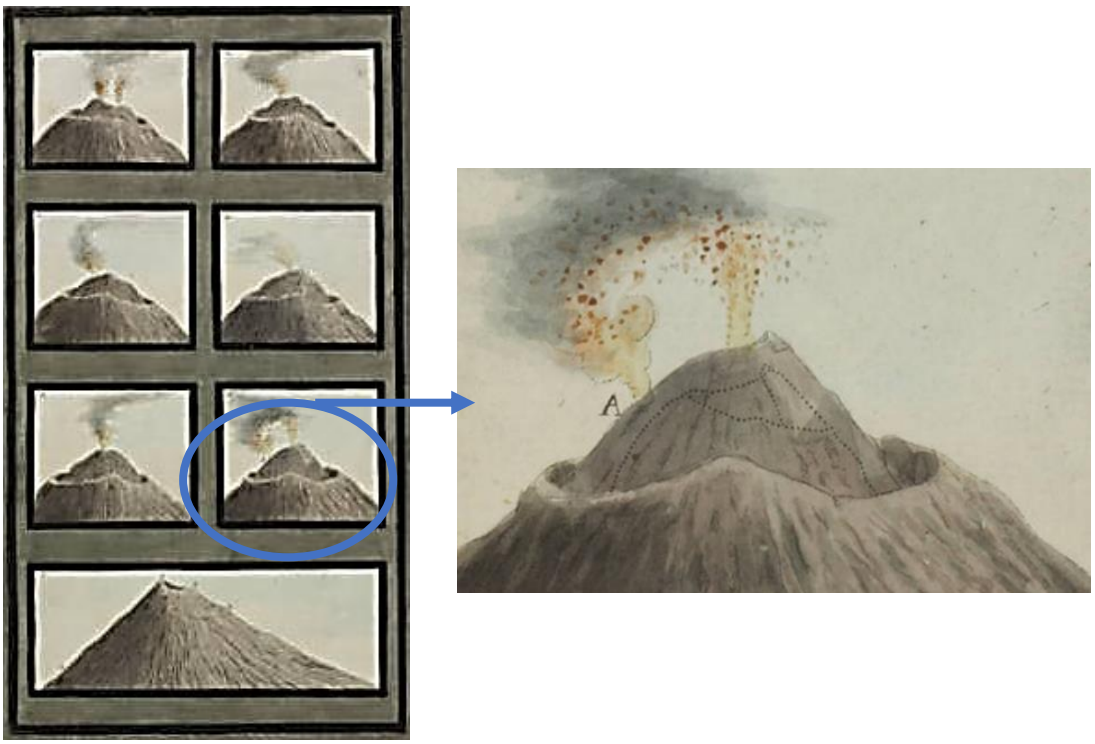


***Figure 6*. Volcanic Phenomena**

6.1. A tunnel cut through tuff at Gratta Pausilipo.

The road is paved with slabs of volcanic lava. Nearby was the tomb of Virgil's tomb. In the image Hamilton links 'deep time', classical history and modern usage of volcanic material

Campi Phlegraei, Volume II, Plate XVI. *Source*: Claremont University, California.

6.2. A drawing from Fr Piaggio's volcanic notebook Source: Royal Society

The illustration is of a volcanic eruption with corresponding electrical phenomena. He lived at the foot of Vesuvius, recording volcanic phenomena, daily between 1779 and 1794. His notebooks are now in the collection of the Royal Society.

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***Figure 7*. The Island of Ventetene**

Campi Phlegraei, Volume II, Plate XXXIV.

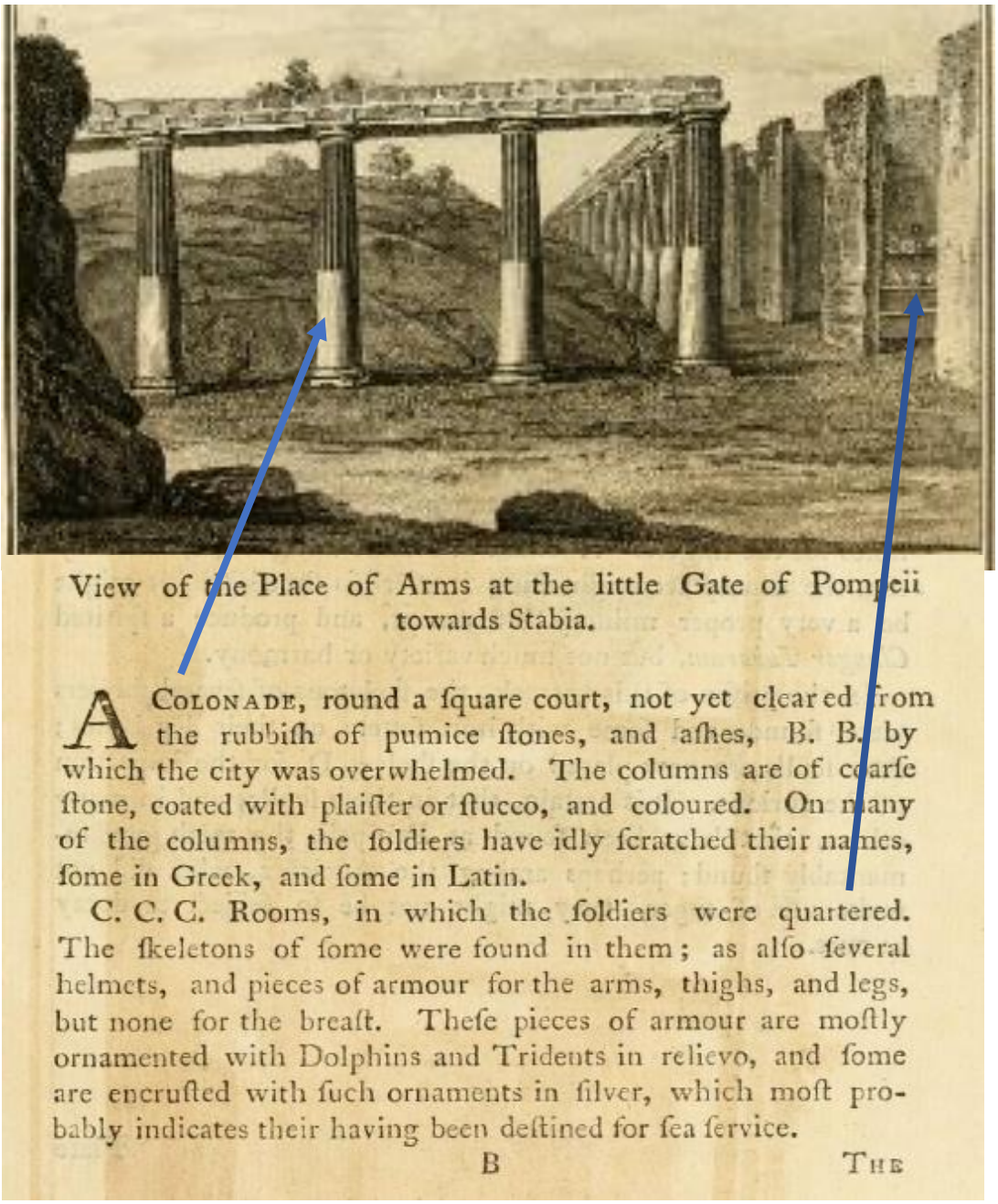
The image illustrates Hamilton's belief that there were successions of fertile soil repeatedly covered with lava.

Source: Claremont University, California. *Artist:* Peter Fabris

***Figure 8*. Plate 1 from Sir William Hamilton's *Account of the Discoveries at Pompeii Communicated to the Society of Antiquaries of London* (1777)**

Note the contrast between the warm colours and images of human interaction in *Campi Phlegraei* and the bleak scene at Pompeii shown here. It demonstrates Hamilton's precise knowledge of the site.

Source: Society of Antiquaries of London



View of the Place of Arms at the little Gate of Pompeii towards Stabia.

A Colonade, round a ſquare court, not yet cleared from the rubbiſh of pumice ſtones, and aſhes, B. B. by which the city was overwhelmed. The columns are of coarſe ſtone, coated with plaiſter or ſtucco, and coloured. On many of the columns, the ſoldiers have idly ſcratched their names, ſome in Greek, and ſome in Latin.

C. C. C. Rooms, in which the ſoldiers were quartered. The ſkeletons of ſome were found in them; as alſo ſeveral helmets, and pieces of armour for the arms, thighs, and legs, but none for the breaſt. Theſe pieces of armour are moſtly ornamented with Dolphins and Tridents in relievo, and ſome are encruſted with ſuch ornaments in ſilver, which moſt probably indicates their having been deſtined for ſea ſervice.

B The

***Figure 9*. Linking the New Kings of Naples & Sicily with an Ancient Pedigree**

9.1. The Roman equestrian statue of Marcus Nonius Balbus

It was later situated at King Charles' palace.

Photograph: Author.

9.2. 'Improving' Antiquities

Left: An image from *Le antichità di Ercolano Esposte* (Naples 1765 Vol 3, Plate 25.) *Right:*

The original wall painting at Pompeii, and its appearance in *Le antichità di ercolano esposte.*

Sources: *Left*: University of Heidelberg. *Right:* Author, photograph taken in the Naples Archaeological Museum.

9.3. The Scrolls from the Villa of the Papyri

Top Left: A scroll opened by Piaggio's machine. *Right*: Antonio Piaggio's machine for opening the scrolls.

Below: An unopened scroll from the Villa of the Papyri.

Source: Naples Archaeological Museum. *Photographs*: Author.

***Figure 10*. The Power of Volcanoes**

10.1. Mount Vesuvius and Mount Somma

Source: Wikipedia Commons.

. Figure10.2. The earliest known Image of Vesuvius prior to the great eruption

Fresco from the House of the Centenary

Photograph: Author. *Source*: Naples Archaeological Museum.

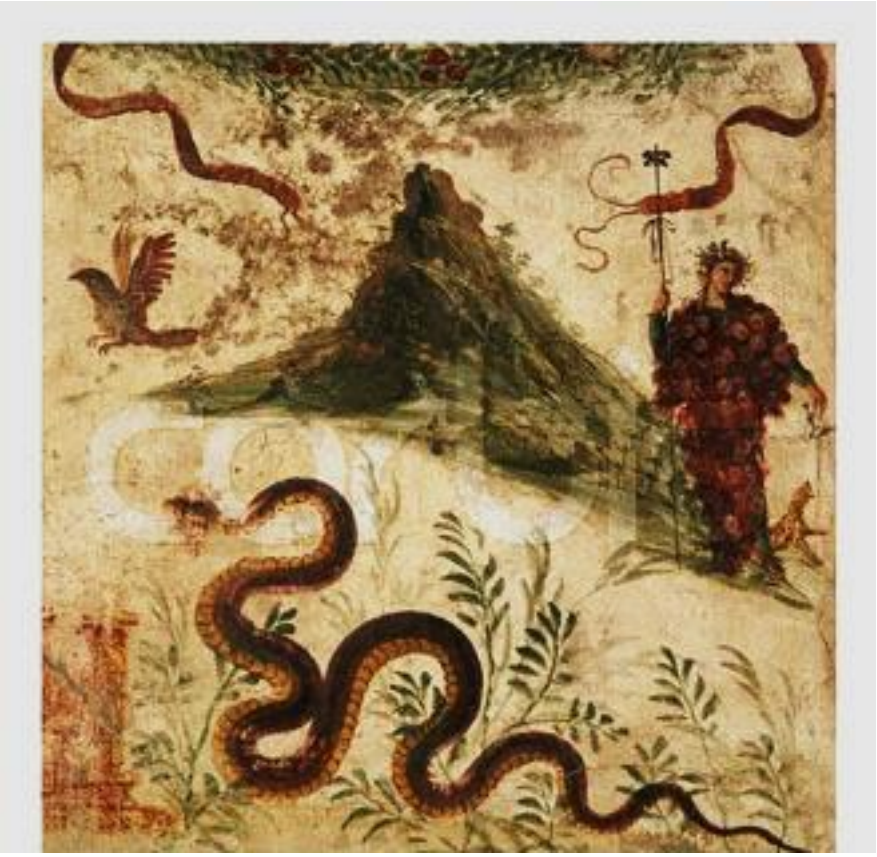


Figure 10.3. Valley of Atrio di Cavallo, between Vesuvius and Somma, *circa* 1770

Fabris's image shows no visible vegetation.

Campi Phlegraei, Volume II, Plate XXXIV. *Source*: Claremont University California.

Figure 10.4. View of the Valley of Atrio di Cavallo, 2017

The image is taken from Vesuvius looking towards Mount Somma in 2017, some 250 years after Fabris's image. Note that vegetation has begun to return.
Photograph: Author.

Figure 10 5. The effect of volcanic eruptions and lava flows on humanity

Campi Phlegraei, Volume II, Plate XII

The agriculturalists who enjoyed the rich volcanic soils of Vesuvius risked losing everything at the whim of the volcano. Hamilton mentions their plight. Note the shape of the mountain then and now.

Source: Claremont University, California. *Author:* Peter Fabris

***Figure 11*. Geology Meets History**

11.1. The Temple of Isis during its excavation, as witnessed by Hamilton

Hamilton stands next to Fabris, who sketches at the Envoy's direction.

Campi Phlegraei Volume II, Plate 37. *Source:* Claremont University, California.

11.2. The much-degraded Temple of Isis as it remains today

Source: https://www.pompeionline.net/pompeii/temples.htm (Accessed 01 01 2020).

Figure 12. **The Trebbia Tomb**

AEGR, Volume II, p. 57

Even though Hamilton knew that such tomb robbery was illegal, this image was printed in Volume II of *AEGR*. It demonstrated the Envoy's privileged position at Court.

Source: University of Heidelberg.

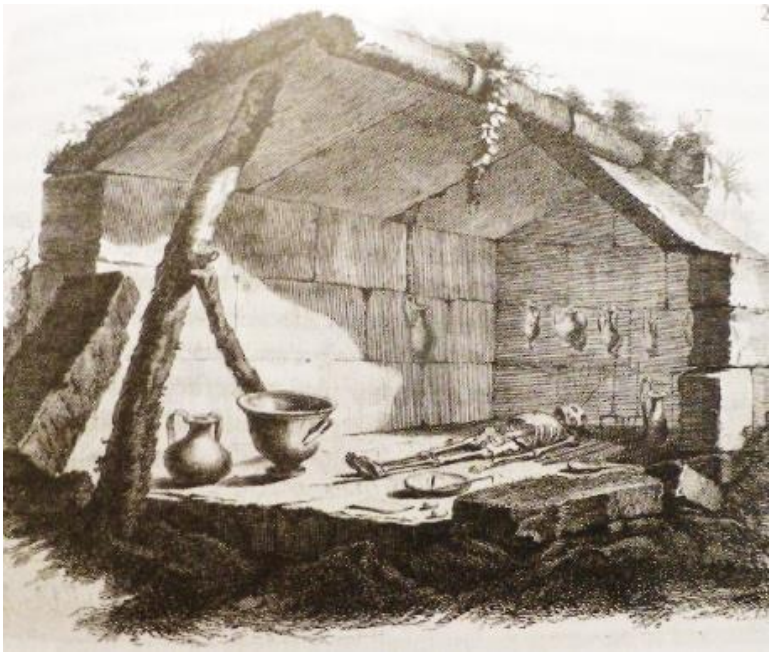


Figure **13. Sir William In a Neapolitan Antiquities Shop, *circa* 1798 *(anon)***

Hamilton is the tall figure, third from right.

Source: Beazley Archive, Oxford University.

***Figure 14*. Early Illustrated Folios of Antiquities; Montfaucon & Caylus**

14.1. A bell krater shown in Montfaucon's *L'Antiquité expliquée et representée en figures*, Volume I, p. 24

The style of the vase is South Italian.

14.2. Comte de Caylus. *Recueil d'Antiquités égyptiennes, étrusques, grecques, romaines et gauloises*, Volime I, Plate 55

Caylus records the left-hand image as a painting from a Roman house in Herculaneum. The owl skyphos to the right is described as an Etruscan vase soon to be exported to Greece. This is inaccurate as it was imported from Greece.

Source: University of Heidelberg.

***Figure 15*. Le antichità di ercolano esposte, Volume I, 1757**

15 1. (*Below, left*) The dedication is to King Charles III of Spain, the founding King of Naples and Sicily.

15.2. (*Right*) The drama of Vesuvius in eruptive mode was used as a reminder of how Herculaneum was destroyed and then resurrected by King Charles.

PREFAZIONE

ORRE il decimonono anno da che il Re ſtabilì di paſſare in Portici qualche ſtagione . Sentì , che in quei luoghi alcuni negli andati tempi ſcavando avevan dato in qualche pezzo di antichità . Ordinò la continuazione , perchè il prodotto foſſe ornamento , e ſtimolo del-

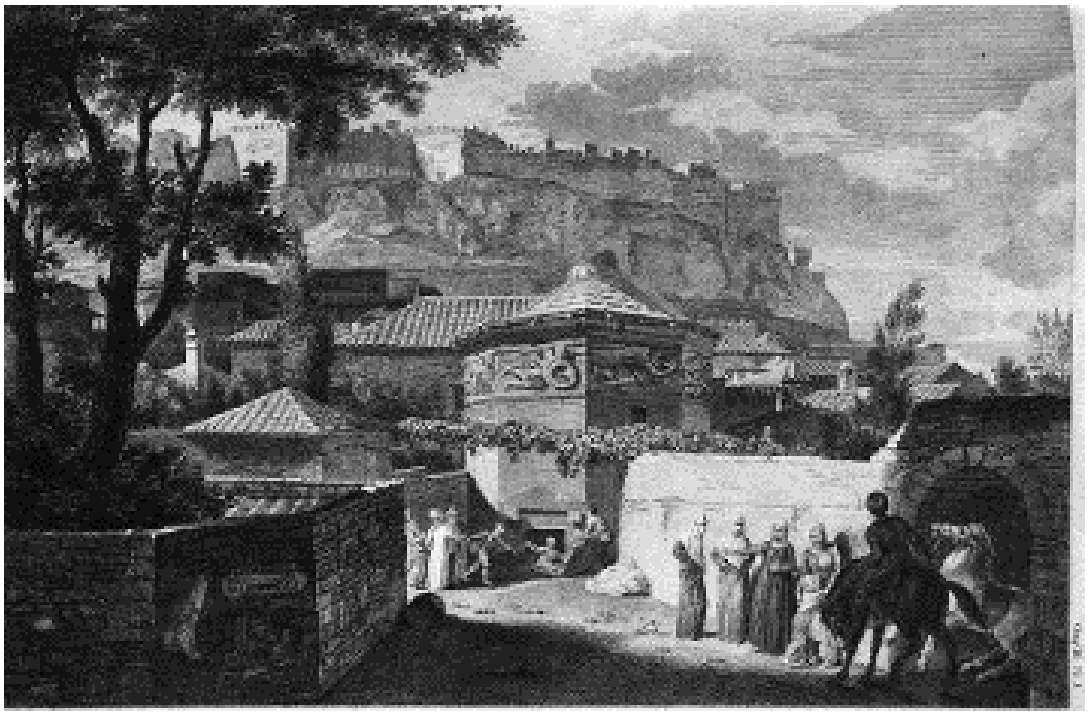
15.3. A fresco image from Herculaneum, 'restored' to eighteenth-century perfection The panel displays the 'airbrushed' perfection of ancient art and the Royal possession of it, displayed in *Le antichità di ercolano esposte.*

Sources for all three images: University of Heidelberg.

***Figure 16*. Stuart and Revett, The Antiquities of Athens (London, 1762)**

Stewart's and Revett's *modus operandi* were to offer a general impression of an ancient building and enliven it in the manner of pastoral georgics. Following this, a specific architectural drawing would be offered, in great detail, such as the tower of the Winds.

16. 1 The Acropolis at Athens from the south west



16.2. The Tower of the Winds

An actual representation was followed by a detailed architectural perspective.

16.3. Trefoil lipped oinochoe *(AEGR*, Vol.1.Plate 95)

Hancarville followed a similar pattern as Stuart and Revett, with detailed vase drawings in *AEGR*. A vase outline is given with detailed measurements, as shown below.

Source for all images: University of Heidelberg.

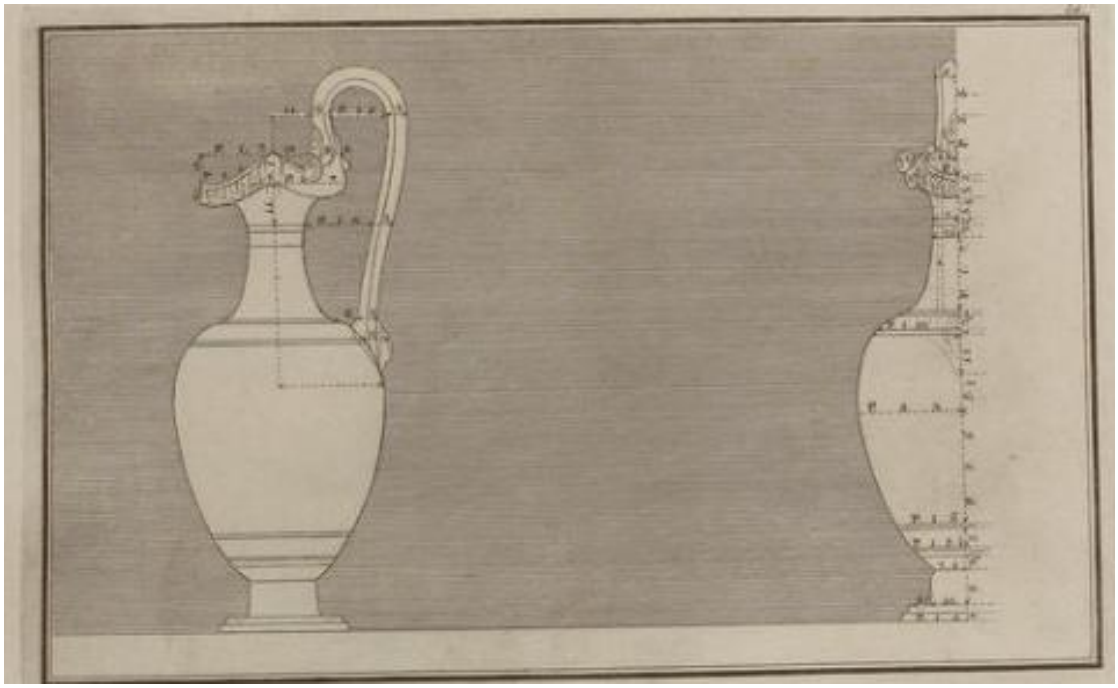


Figure 17. AEGR* in comparison with Passeri's *Etruscorum in vasculis

The stylistic similarities between both publications are apparent, even if the aims of the two works were different.

Source for both images: University of Heidelberg.

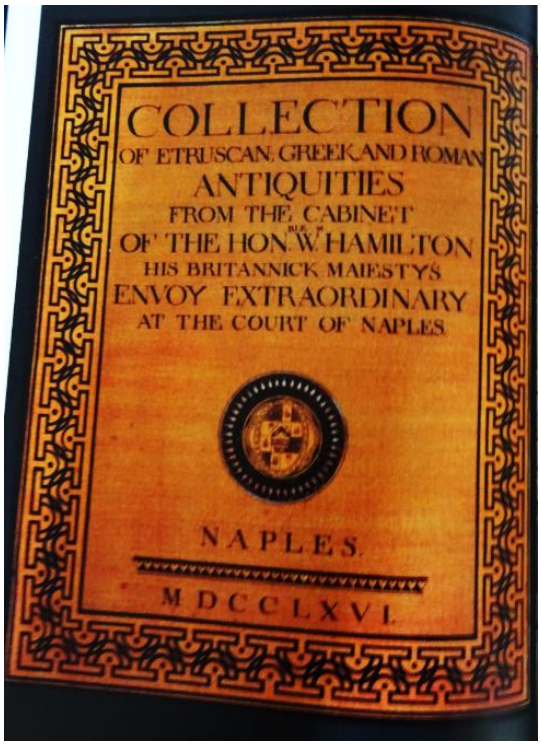
17.1. *Etruscorum in vasculis,* Volume 1, Plate 2

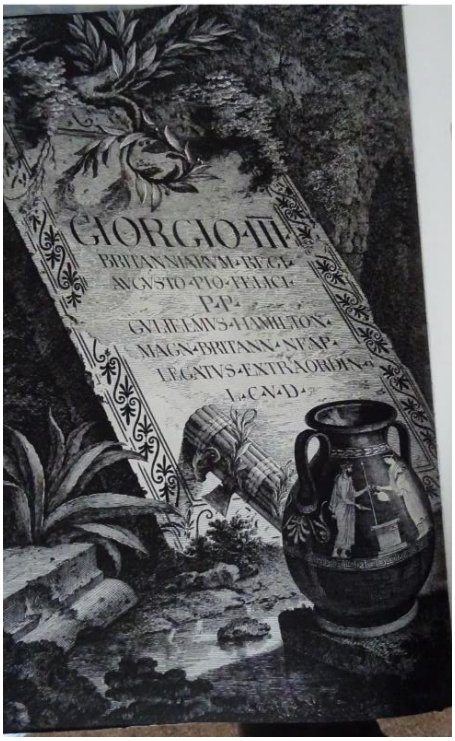
17.2. *AEGR*, Volume I, Plate 48

Figure 18*. Sumptuous Engravings in *AEGR

18.1. The Title Page and frontispiece to *AEGR,* Volume I

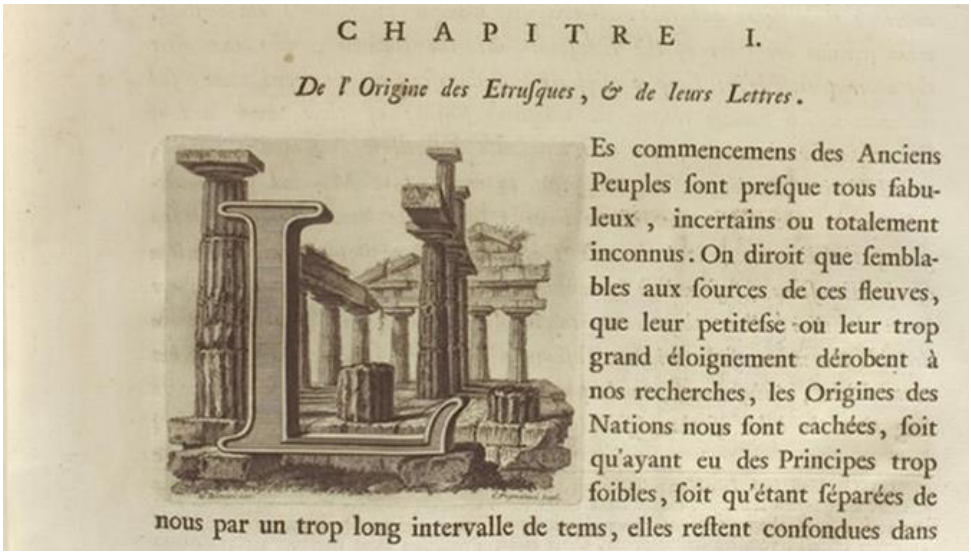
Source: Taschen Books, *Hancarville Antiquities,The Complete Collection.*





18.2. The Initial letter in Volume III, Page 21, with the 'L' merging into a Greek temple.

Source: University of Heidelberg.



CHAPITRE I.

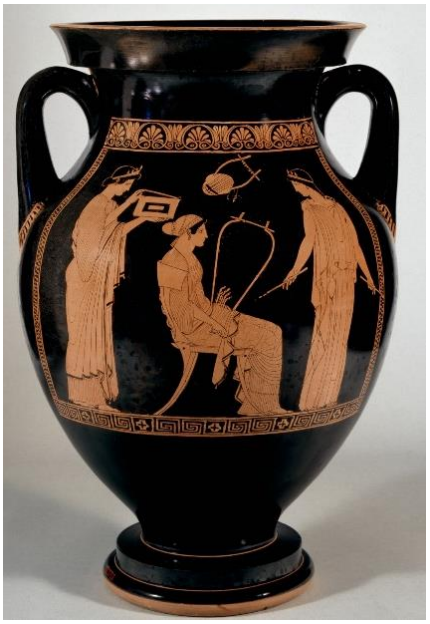
De l'Origine des Etruſques, & de leurs Lettres.

LEs commencemens des Anciens Peuples ſont preſque tous fabuleux, incertains ou totalement inconnus. On diroit que ſemblables aux ſources de ces fleuves, que leur petiteſſe ou leur trop grand éloignement dérobent à nos recherches, les Origines des Nations nous ſont cachées, ſoit qu'ayant eu des Principes trop foibles, ſoit qu'étant ſéparées de nous par un trop long intervalle de tems, elles reſtent confondues dans

***Figure 19*. The Hunt Krater and the Volumina Amphora**

Source: Taschen Books, *Antiquities, The Complete Collection*.

19.1. *Left*: The Hunt Krater. *Right:* The Volumn1a amphora



19.2. The Hunt Krater as it appears in *AEGR*, Volume I, p.154

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***Figure 20*. The Meidias Vase and the use made of its Imagery**

20.1. Left: The Meidias Vase

20.2. *Right:* The abduction scene on the upper frieze of the vase

Source: British Museum.

20.3. The Meidias Vase redrawn as if an image by Raphael (*AEGR,* Volume II, Plate 22)
Source. Taschen Books, *Antiquities, the Complete Edition*

***Figure 21*. Newtimber Place, Hassocks, Sussex; an *AEGR* extravaganza**

21.1. Hancarville's 'Raphael' drawing of the Meidias Vase is extended over a 36-foot wall. *(See Figure 20.3)*

Photos: Author.

21.2. Detail of 1. (above)

Figure 22. Imagination and image

22.1 The title pages of *AEGR*, Volumes II & III

Left: *AEGR* Volume II, Memorial to Winckelmann

Centre: 'For the love of my [British] countrymen'

Left: AEGR Volume III, showing the dedication to Hancarville's new Patron.

Source: University of Heidelberg.

22.2. *AEGR,* Vol.3. (Preface)

Hancarville declares his past dead and dedicates this memorial to himself.

Source: Taschen Books, *Antiquities, The Complete Edition.*

22.3. Actual Vases transformed into two dimensional images

The observer would have no concept of the lidded lebes gamekos from which the image is derived, nor the reality of the vase's border.

AEGR: Volume I, Plate 117 (BM Vases, F. 205).

Source: Author's collection *Photograph*: Author.

***Figure 23*. Wedgwood's Development of vase imagery**

23.1. The Neoclassical and Romantic Movements

Wedgwood's Jasperware 'Ruined Column Vase'. A Romaniticised image.

Source: Victoria and Albert Museum, London. *Photograph:* Miss Elizabeth Stone.

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23.2. Wedgwood 'First Day Vases'

First Right: Day Vases. *Source:* Wedgwood Museum. *Right*: The two sides of the 'First Day Vase' with figures from the Meidias Vase as decoration, (1769).

Source: Wedgwood Museum. *Photos:* Author.

23. 3. John Flaxman*, The Apotheosis of Homer*.

Top: Flaxman's Vase. *Middle:* The bas relief that Wedgwood sent Hamilton as a gift. *Below:* Directoire style of French ceramics, c. 1797

Source Wedgwood Museum.

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***Figure 24*. Neoclassical Designs at Osterley House, Hounslow, London**

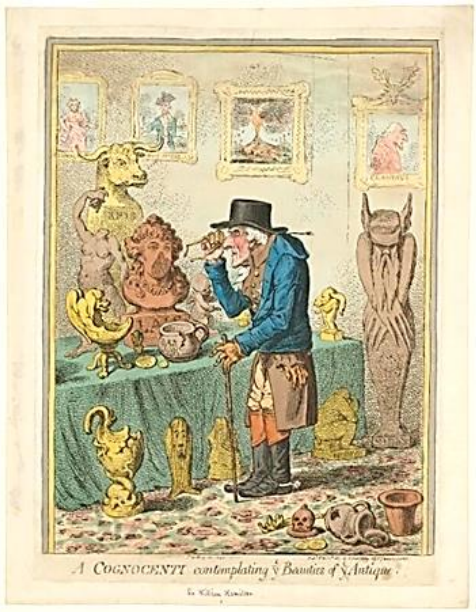
Top Left: The Etruscan Room, Osterley House
Right: A Wedgewood Black Basalt Vase
Below Left: Detail from the Etruscan Room. *Right*: A Henry Clay Table with scenes from *AEGR*.[868] *Photos*: Author.

[868] See Morrison, Letter 56, Hamilton to Charles Greville, Naples, 04 07 1775. In it the Envoy expresses delight at receiving Henry Clay's 'dressing boxes *a l'Étrusque'.*

Figure 25. **Sir William Hamilton, Apogee to Disgrace**

25. 1. *Left*: Hamilton in 1777 (Reynolds). *Right*: James Gillray's perception of Hamilton in 1801.

Sources: *Left*. National Gallery. *Right*: British Museum.



25.2. A rejuvenated Sir William with Lady Hamilton opening an Etruscan Tomb near Nola. (Detail from C H Kneip's frontispiece to *CEAV,* Volume I)
Source: Rasmussen and Spivey, *Looking at Greek Vases.*

***Figure 26*. 'Seria Ludo'**

Sir Francis Dashwood's and Sir William Hamilton's portraits on joining the Society of Dilettantti.

Below Left: Sir Francis Dashwood, 11 Baron Le Despencer, by George Knapton, 1742.

Right: Sir William Hamilton by Joshua Reynolds, *circa* 1778.

*Source*s: *Left:* Redford, B., *Dilettanti: The Antic and the Antique*, Figure 1. p. 24.

Right. J. M. Kelly, *The Society of Dilettanti*, Figure 135.

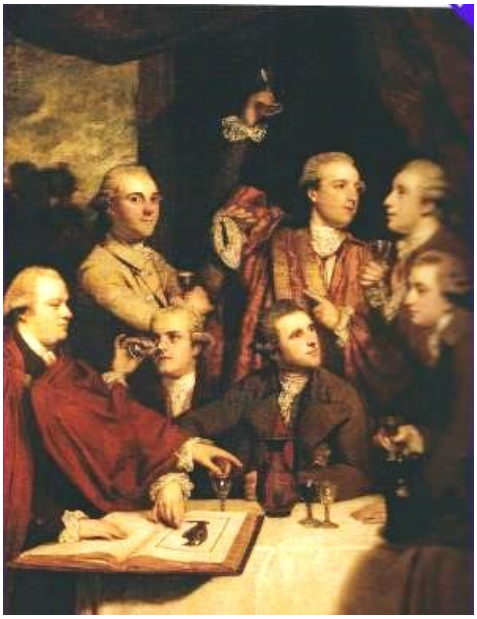


***Figure 27*. 'Modern Antiques' or Necromancy**

Emma Hamilton embraces Nelson after his death in 1805.

Printed a year after the Admiral's death, Nelson and Emma are reunited in this scene. Note the vases above the figures. Hamilton might be the gnome-like figure above the couple.

Thomas Rowlandson, 1806. *Source*: British Museum.

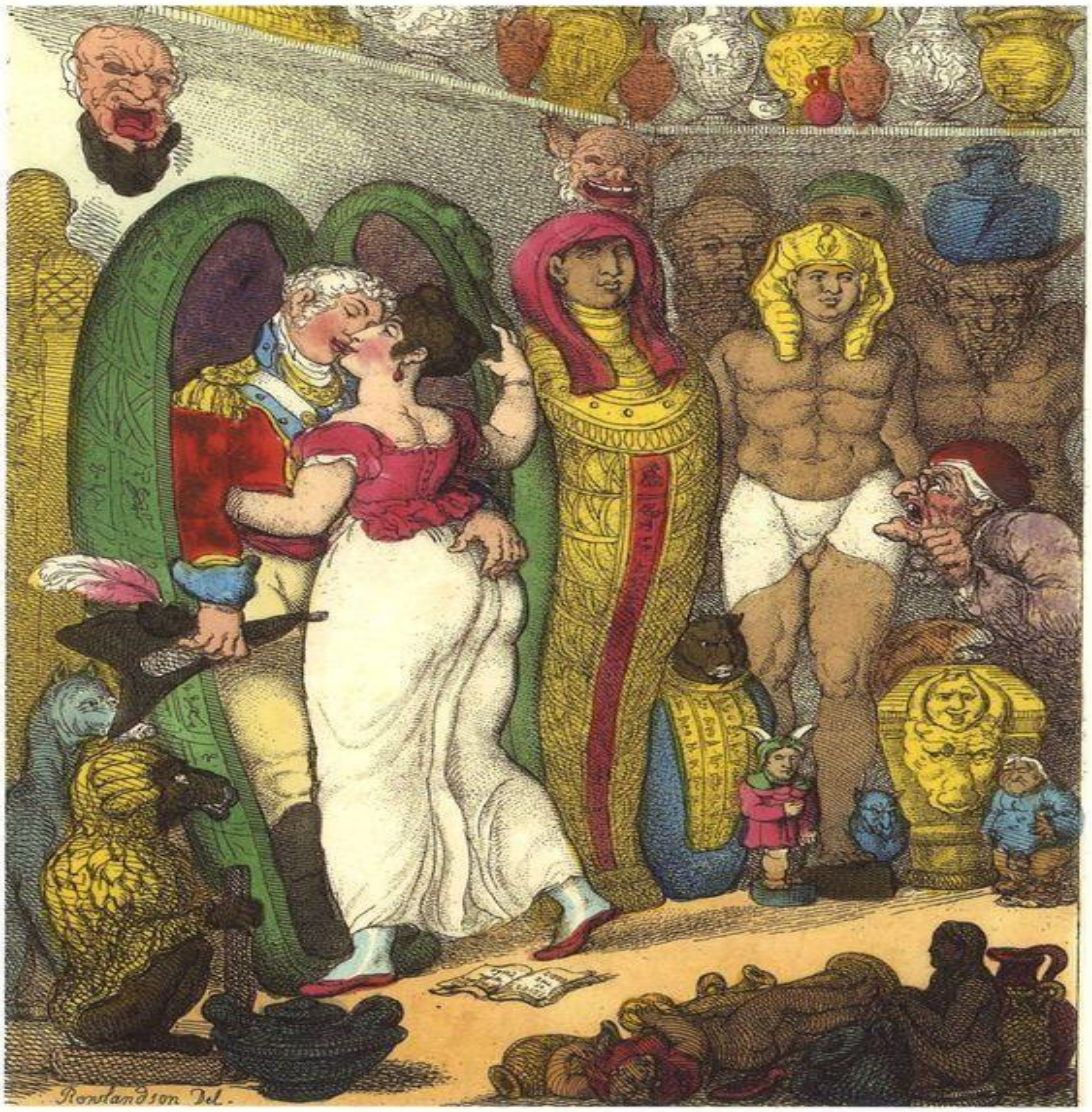


***Figure 28*. Emma Hamilton's 'Attitudes' and Dress à la Grecque**

Top: Emma's Attitudes drawn by Frederick Rehberg, 1792.
Below Left: Amy Lyon (?), later Lady Hamilton, as the 'goddess of health'
Source: National Maritime Museum.
Centre & right: Rehberg's stitched folio in the British Museum.
Sources: British Museum & Victoria and Albert Museum.

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28.2 Dress a la Grecques, Paris 1802

Source: Image from the *Journal des Dames,* New York Public Library.

28.3. Emma as Ariadne by Sir Joshua Reynolds. *Source:* National Gallery.

Figure 29. Informing the People

29.1. The Caricature Shop, 1801 (Anon)

Source: https://cherylsregencyramblings.wordpress.com/category/emma-hamilton/

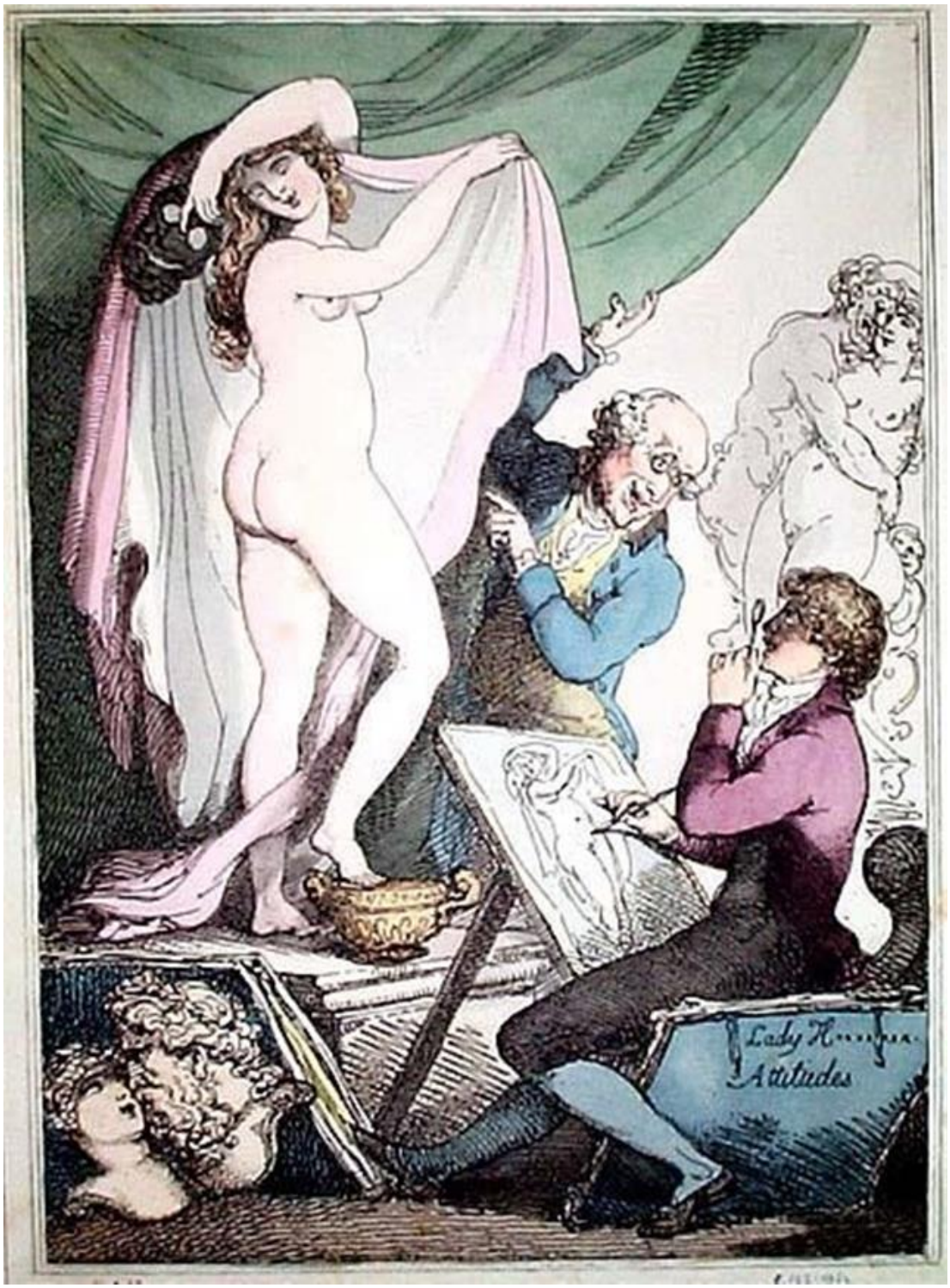
29.2 Newspapers and debate in the 'Penny University'

Source: British Library.

***Figure 30*. Sir William and Lady Hamilton Objectified**

30.1. Lady H******* Attitudes.

Artist: Thomas Rowlandson, *circa.* 1800. S*ource*: British Museum.



30.2. *'Dido in Despair'.*

A pregnant Emma watches as the fleet departs, leaving a geriatric Sir William sleeping.
Note the various erotic books and artefacts that surround her.
Artist: James Gillray, 1801. *Source*: British Museum.

30.3. *'A Mansion House Treat – or Smoking Attitudes!'*

Lady Emma Hamilton, dressed à la Grecque, smokes with her lover Lord Nelson. Her husband, Sir William, has his pipe lit by a sailor as he sits between Lord Mayor of London, at left, and Prime Minister Pitt.

Artist: Isaac Cruikshank. *Source:* British Museum.

30.4. Tormenting the already broken Emma

Left: Plate VI from Frederick Rehberg, *Drawings Faithfully copied from Nature* (London, 1797). *Source*: British Museum.

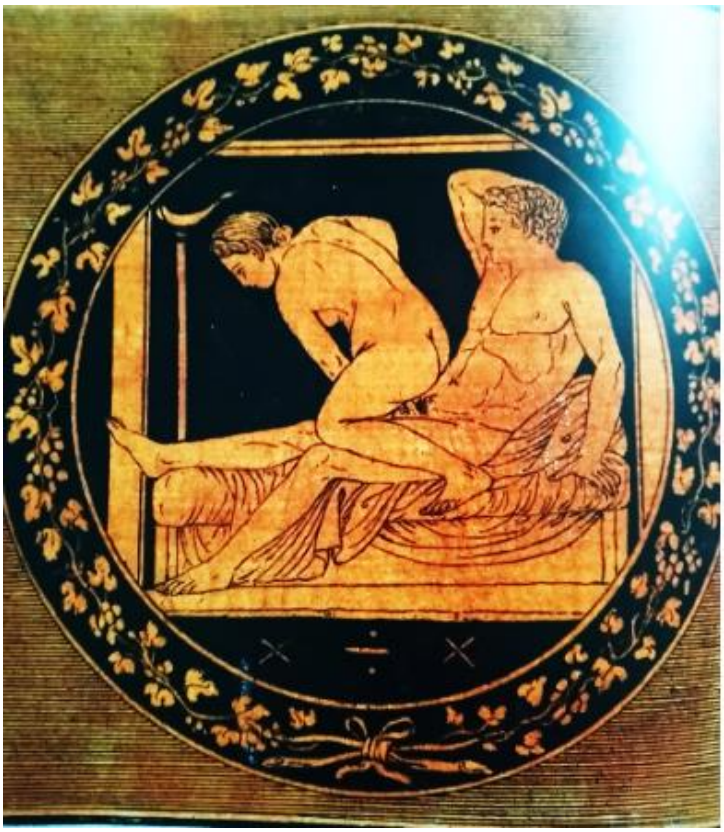
Right: James Gillray, *A New Edition, Considerably Enlarged, of Attitudes Faithfully Copied from Nature and Humbly Dedicated to All Admirers of the Grand and Sublime* (1807)

Source: British Museum

***Figure 31*: Changing Attitudes to Nudity, 1770–1804**
The images demonstrate the change in public acceptability of the nude form in the second half of the eighteenth century.

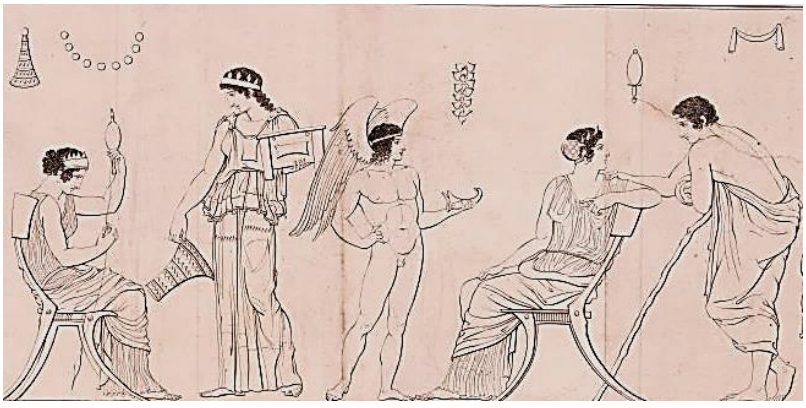
1.1. An explicit erotic scene. AEGR, Volume IV, Plate 123, *circa* 1775

Source: Taschen Books, *Antiquities, the Complete Edition.*



31.2. CEAV, Volume II, Figure 61.1, 1795

This plate from *CEAV* demonstrates how nudity was portrayed in a restrained manner in 1795.
Source: University of Heidelberg.



31.3. Thomas Kirk, *Outlines from the Figures and Composition upon the Greek, Roman and Etruscan Vases of the Late Sir William Hamilton* (1804), Plate 40

Kirk's image has eliminated, totally, the representation of genitalia,
Source: Nabu Public Domain Reprints.

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